Ople links Iraqi diplomat to Abu Sayyaf bombing

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Ibon poll: Metro raps GMA; Roco widens lead

By Carlito Pablo

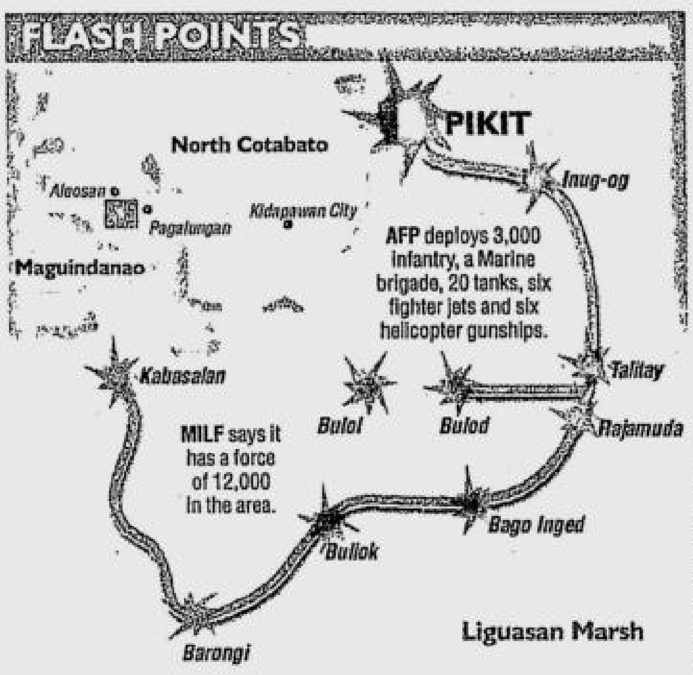
ALMOST half of the voters in Metro, Manila don't believe in President Macapagal-Arroyo's Dec. 30 declaration that she will not run in next year's presidential election, according to a recent survey by the Ibon Foundation Inc.

And if she were to run today, Ms Maca-

IBON/ A17

AN ARMY soldier grips his M60 machine gun while on patrol on the outskirts of Zamboanga City. REUTERS

GOVERNMENT troops backed by heavy artillery and helicopter gunships mass Monday around Liguasan Marsh bordering North Cotabato and Maguindanao provinces, ready to strike at a large force of Moro rebels. More than 20,000 civilians have evacuated their homes.



INQGRAPHIC: MARLONE RUBIO

Eyeball-to-eyeball in Pikit

'Crisis manager' under fire

By Norman Bordadora, Carlito Pablo and Cynthia Balana

THE PRESIDENT'S "crisis manager" for the Middle East went to work yesterday trying to defuse his first crisis—one that was of his own making.

National Security Adviser Roilo Golez found himself facing a storm of criticism after erroneously announcing the closure of the Philippine Embassy in Baghdad and the transfer of its operations to Amman, Jordan, the other day.

"Such an announcement serves no vital purpose, especially since it was inaccurate," Foreign Secretary Blas Ople told reporters.

"It is further regrettable that this could have been avoided. Under the current circumstances in the diplomatic community, certain civilized rules should be followed. It is unfortunate that these were not observed," a visibly affected Ople said.

CRISIS/ A16

'Mama, please pray for us. We are off to war'

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk
and Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

"MAMA, please pray for us. We're being sent to war."

Isabel Miclat remembered what her children, Jose and Johanna, said in their separate telephone conversations with her two Saturdays ago from Egypt, just outside the border of Iraq.

Their last phone calls were, to Miclat, more disturbing. "They're now in Iraq," she said in Kapampangan, shedding a lot of tears at that thought.

Filipino-Americans in the US military are going to play a "very, very significant role" in the Iraq crisis because of the top

MAMA/ A16

GETTY IMAGES REUTERS

DARK foreboding. Above, a US Army UH60 Blackhawk helicopter prepares for night takeoff at Fort Campbell in Kentucky, home of the 101st Airborne, which has been ordered to proceed to the Persian Gulf. In Camp Pendleton, California, members of the 1st Marine Expeditionary force assembled very early Sunday as they prepared for deployment to the Middle East.

Gov't troops surround MILF rebels

By the PDI Mindanao Bureau and Martin P. Marfil in Manila

PIKIT, North Cotabato—Thousands of government troops have massed near a Moro rebel stronghold and are poised to launch a major military offensive.

At least a thousand Moro Islamic Liberation Front rebels, together with Pentagon Gang kidnap members, are believed holed up inside a rebel camp near the boundary of this town and Pagalungan, Maguindanao.

As the Armed Forces poured in troops backed by heavy artillery and helicopter gunships, an official of the Archdiocese of Cotabato said at least 20,000 civilians have been evacuated.

"There are about 1,000 members of the lawless elements, including some MILF, who assembled in that area and so we are going to assault that area," Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes told reporters in a hastily called press conference in Camp Aguinaldo. The suspected criminals include some who were linked to a deadly bomb attack last December, he added.

"We're going to assault that area," Reyes said. "Lawless elements, after committing their dastardly act, seek refuge in these camps so we have to overrun these camps."

In some villages on the outskirts of this town, soldiers were facing the rebels "eyeball-to-eyeball" and fighting could erupt at any time, said Army Col. Cardoso Luna.

He claimed that there may be as many as 2,000 rebels bracing for battle, and said the rebels had already asked their relatives to evacuate to safer areas to avoid getting caught in the crossfire.

EYEBALL/ A16

French, German opposition irks US

BRUSSELS/BAGHDAD—France, Germany and Belgium, among Europe's staunchest opponents of a US rush to war in Iraq, infuriated Washington on Monday by blocking a Nato plan to boost Turkish defenses in case of an outbreak of hostilities.

Their opposition revealed deep splits across the globe over attacking Iraq because of Baghdad's alleged weapons of mass destruction. Nato responded by calling a special meeting on Monday morning to discuss the deadlock.

Earlier, France and Germany enlisted the support of Russia for their own plan to avert an early war by boosting the number of UN inspectors deployed in Iraq under a UN resolution adopted unanimously last November.

The moves by the European heavy-

FRENCH/ A13

'Excluded families' hit Church

By Blanche S. Rivera

IF it had not been for its "Christian values," her "bastard" family would not have accepted her half-brother, former senator Juan Ponce Enrile, when he was a young man, Armida Siguion-Reyna said in an outburst against the Catholic Church.

Siguion-Reyna, former chair of the Movie Television Review and Classification Board, was a guest at the First Wild Meeting of Excluded Families, a mockery of the recently concluded Fourth World Meeting of Families, on Sunday evening.

Single parents, unwed mothers, sep-

EXCLUDED/ A16

Palace wars: Bobi gets Marcos room

By Carlito Pablo

IT'S even-steven for feuding Malacañang chief of staff Rigoberto Tiglao and Press Secretary Hernani Braganza.

Tiglao has won control over the former Marcos bedroom, while Braganza will get to replace Press Undersecretary

PALACE/ A17

OKS NA ANG BEDROOM POLITICS

Senate defies Paris-based body

By Gerald G. Lacuarta and Christine O. Avendaño

THE SENATE and the House approved unanimously last night amendments to the Anti-Money Laundering Act, although the Senate version did not contain the changes insisted on by the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force.

Senate President Franklin Drilon and Senators Francis Pangilinan and Sergio Osmeña III voted in favor of the Senate version with reservations.

"What we did was not enough to escape sanctions," Osmeña said in expressing his reservations. "I'm hopeful that the Filipino people will forgive us," he added.

The Senate rejected the proposed amendment that would have let banking regulators freely look into bank accounts. Voting 12-8, the senators removed the provision in Senate Bill 2419 that would have allowed the

SENATE/ A16

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/02/11/03

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Second FRONTPAGE

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Iraq-Abu link bared

By Norman Bordadora

FOREIGN Secretary Blas Ople yesterday linked a senior Iraqi diplomat in Manila to a deadly bomb attack by the Abu Sayyaf bandit group that killed a United States serviceman and injured another in Zamboanga City last October.

In a news conference yesterday, Ople said he had received a "very detailed" report from the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency that Iraq Embassy Second Secretary Husham Hussein had been in contact with Abu Sayyaf bandits.

"It appeared that immediately after the bombing, there was a call to the embassy by a suspected Abu Sayyaf guerrilla. The call was for Hussein," Ople said, saying intelligence officials uncovered the alleged link by tracing the phone calls between them.

"I have put the Iraqi Embassy on notice that their activities are being monitored by the Philippine intelligence community," said Ople.

Ople called the press briefing after summoning Iraqi charge d'affaires Samir Bolus who agreed to instruct his second secretary to "cease and desist from actions inconsistent with his diplomatic status and actions that are harmful to Philippine Iraq relations."

Bolus, however, denied the allegations, he said.

Ople did not say what role Hussein played in the October 2002 Zamboanga City bombing, one of several bomb explosions blamed on the Abu Sayyaf. He said there would be no further investigation into the incident, even as the intelligence community would be constantly watching the Iraqi diplomats.

Ople indicated the government would not try to expel the diplomat.

"I prefer to give a warning," he said.

Bolus and the embassy could not be immediately reached for comment.

Last week, Bolus was summoned by Ople and warned about joining anti-US street protests, saying the Iraqi envoy had abused his diplomatic privileges.

Authorities have warned of possible "sympathy attacks" by Islamic militants against vital installations and US interests in the country amid US war threats on Iraq.

The University of the Philippines community led by UP president Francisco Nemenzo, yesterday added its voice to those protesting the impending US war on Iraq.

"Let it not be said that UP stood silent as the Bush-fire grows into a conflagration," Nemenzo said at a joint press conference with the student and teachers groups yesterday.

Nemenzo condemned the US war on Iraq, saying that only the Iraqi people had the right to decide on the fate of Saddam Hussen, no matter how "cruel and oppressive" he may be.

Nemenzo encouraged the UP community to join the Feb. 14 anti-war rally on Friday, although he said classes would not be suspended.

Militant students yesterday launched a drive to gather one million signatures opposing the US-led war on Iraq as militants held protest rallies at the Luneta and the US Embassy.

Apo Alvarez, chair of Anakbayan, said the drive would be held in colleges, universities, high schools and urban poor communities.

The signatures to be collected will be passed on to Congress in support of a House resolution against the war in Iraq.

Another copy will be sent to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Senators yesterday warned the President against making premature announcements on Iraq which could create the perception that the Philippines was its enemy.

Senate President Franklin Drilon said the President should refrain from echoing the war threats of US President George W. Bush, saying these could expose millions of Filipino workers in the Middle East to possible retaliation from Iraqi sympathizers.

Sen. Aquilino Pimentel said the President's announcement that the country was behind the US efforts to wage war against Iraq has placed the Philippines in danger of retaliation by Iraqi allies.

Majority Leader Loren Legarda said that using force to deal with Iraq was not the only option available. *With reports from AFP, Reuters, Cynthia D. Balana, Agnes F. Donato, Philip C. Tubeza and Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Ax checkpoints, cops ordered

THE PHILIPPINE National Police yesterday directed its field units to dismantle all existing checkpoints nationwide.

Mobile checkpoints, acting PNP chief for operations Chief Supt. Vidal Querol said, could only be put up as part of pursuit or follow-up operations.

"Field commanders and directors may put up such mobile checkpoints only in support of special operations and hot pursuit," Querol said in a memorandum issued yesterday.

Querol said the checkpoints should be dismantled "so as not to give a semblance of a permanent fixture in police operations."

Checkpoints were put up nationwide beginning Feb. 4 as part of the campaign against loose firearms.

In the same document, Querol said if checkpoints have to be set up, field commanders must inform their higher-ups of their location, purpose and expected duration.

He reminded commanders to see to it that policemen strictly observe the human rights of citizens and the "visual search doctrine."

Meanwhile, the Senate yesterday threw its weight behind the campaign to rid the streets of loose firearms by assuring the passage of a law imposing stiffer penalties for violators. *M. Marfil and C. Balana*

Alvarez, Cojuangco 'in' again with GMA

By Dona Pazzibugan

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has appointed two formerly "departed" allies to positions of import.

Erstwhile political supporter Jose "Peping" Cojuangco is the new presidential adviser on food security and job creation, a post that carries Cabinet rank.

Former Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez, two months after he was axed, has been named "presidential adviser for overseas Filipino communities."

The two took their oaths yesterday in Malacañang.

Cojuangco leads the Council on Philippine Affairs (Copa), which has been critical of the administration. In his new capacity, he cochairs with Agriculture Secretary Cito Lorenzo a brand-new superbody called National Council on Food Security and Job Creation.

Cojuangco was one of the founders of the Kabalikat ng Mamamayang Pilipino (Kampi), Ms Macapagal's original political party.

Fellow Copa leader Pastor "Boy" Saycon witnessed Cojuangco's oath-taking from the sidelines. He wasn't seen to approach Ms Macapagal at any point, and she did not show any sign that she saw him at all.

A year after she assumed the presidency in January 2001, the President had a falling out with Copa leaders led by Saycon whom she accused of plotting against her administration and whom she proceeded to call "termites."

Executive Order 174, which created the new council, was signed on Jan. 30.

The inter-agency body was mandated to oversee all plans and programs related to food security, including farm productivity, transportation of food, conservation of natural resources, and marketing.

In a Cabinet revamp, Ms Macapagal replaced Alvarez with environmental activist Elizea Gozun on Dec. 1.

At the time, she said Alvarez would still oversee the Mt. Diwalwal gold mining site which was taken over by the government a few weeks before.

Shortly after, Alvarez was reportedly asked to chair the Presidential Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA), a deal that fell through.

Last week, the President disclosed that ex-Justice Secretary Hernando Perez was still part of her official family.

During a power plant inauguration in Batangas, she introduced him as "Cabinet officer for regional development for Southern Tagalog."

Perez resigned on Dec. 27 in the thick of a $2-million extortion charge hurled against him by Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez, who has since been extradited.

Also last week, it was reported that Perez's law partner, Agnes Devanadera, had been appointed fifth justice undersecretary.

Perez's replacement, ex-Public Works Secretary Simeon Datumanong, likewise took his oath yesterday, but only as "acting justice secretary."

Nene says emigrant vote constitutional

By Cynthia D. Balana

SEN. Aquilino "Nene" Pimentel said there should be no doubts anymore about enfranchising emigrants to vote after two members of the Constitutional Commission that drafted the 1987 Constitution declared it was the intent of the framers not to deprive departing Filipinos of their right to vote unless they renounced Philippine citizenship.

Constitutionalist Fr. Joaquin Bernas and Foreign Secretary Blas Ople have affirmed that granting emigrants the right to vote was constitutional, according to Pimentel, one of the principal authors of the absentee voting bill.

Many have questioned Congress' allowing emigrants to vote in national elections starting 2004 on condition that they execute an affidavit declaring their intent to resume residence in the Philippines within three years of registering as voters.

Pimentel quoted Bernas as saying that the grant of the right to vote to emigrants was valid since the affidavit would indicate that an emigrant had not applied for citizenship in another country.

On whether the execution of such an affidavit conclusively settles the voting right of an emigrant, Bernas said: "I would say that, unless successfully challenged in an exclusion proceeding before a competent court, the person must be allowed to vote."

Ople said the right of every Filipino to vote follows them everywhere unless they acquire new citizenship.

"With the authoritative views of Fr. Bernas and Secretary Ople that there is no constitutional impediment to the absentee voting right of emigrants, it can be safely concluded that this issue is moot and academic," Pimentel said.

The Senate has ratified the report of the congressional conference committee, the bicameral body that reconciled the House and Senate versions of the absentee voting bill. The House has yet to act on the committee's report. President Macapagal-Arroyo is expected to sign the compromise bill into law this week.

Pimentel stressed that the constitutional requirement of residence for at least one year in the Philippines applies only to voters who are living in the country.

He said the compromise reached by the committee recognized the constitutional principle of domicile as distinguished from residence.

Domicile means the country or place from where a person originated and where he intends to settle permanently.

While overseas Filipinos are temporarily not residing in the Philippines, they could still consider themselves domiciled in the country, Pimentel said.

He said Bernas' opinion that an emigrant's declaration of an intention to re-establish residence in the Philippines simply meant he or she had not abandoned Philippine domicile.

Bernas was further quoted as saying that the Constitution has dispensed with the six-month residence requirement in the case of Filipinos abroad still domiciled in the Philippines.

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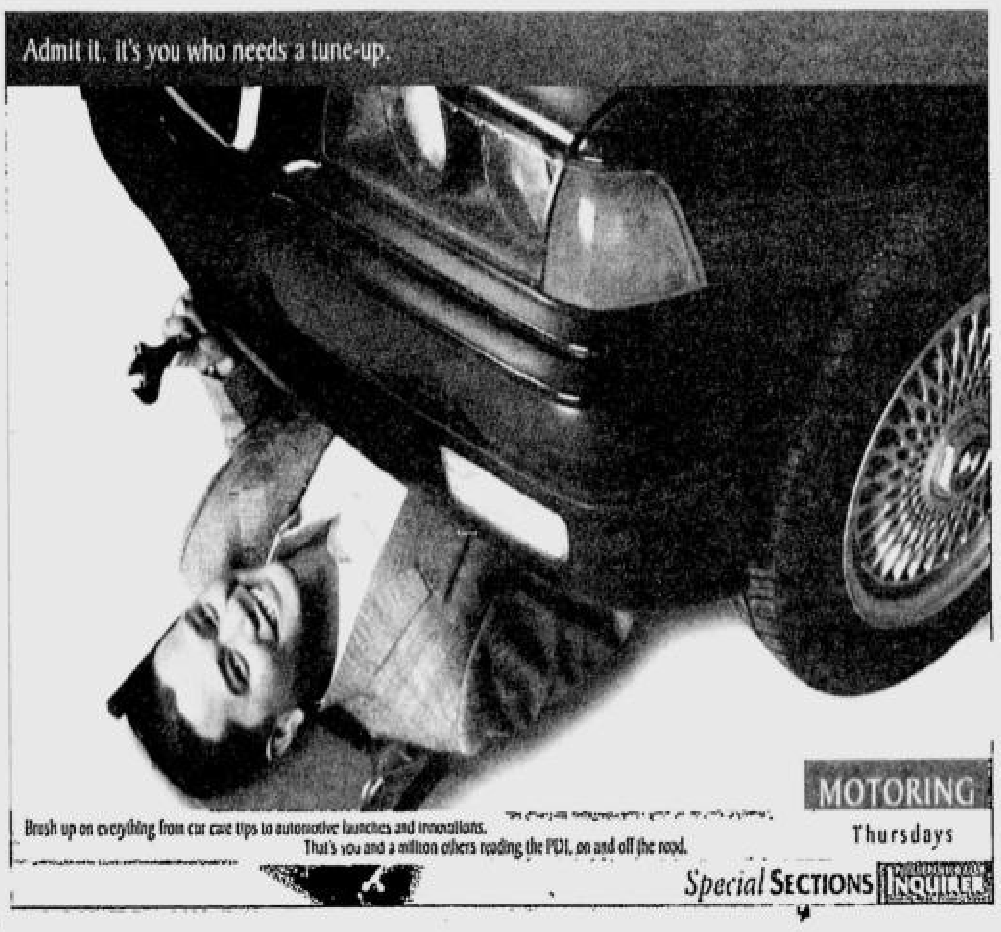

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Filipino pilgrim dies performing Hajj in Mecca

A FILIPINO pilgrim died while performing the Hajj in Mecca, and another one was taken to the hospital after she slipped on a pavement while preparing for the visit to the Kaaba.

The Hajj is one of the five pillars of Islam. Able-bodied Muslims who can afford the trip to Mecca are compelled to perform the ritual at least once in their lifetime.

Literally Arabic for "cube," the Kaaba is the central, cubic stone structure covered by a black cloth, within the Al-Masjid El-Haram, Islam's Grand Mosque. Also known as the House of God, it is the center of the Hajj rituals.

It is in the direction of the Kaaba that Muslims the world over turn during prayers.

Zamzamin Ampatuan, executive director of the Office of Muslim Affairs, identified the fatality as Dapandian Datu Imam of Malabang, Lanao del Sur.

Speaking from Saudi Arabia by phone, Ampatuan told the Church-ran Radio dxMS in Cotabato City that Datu Imam was run over by a speeding truck in the morning of Sunday, first day of the Hajj, and died in a hospital there.

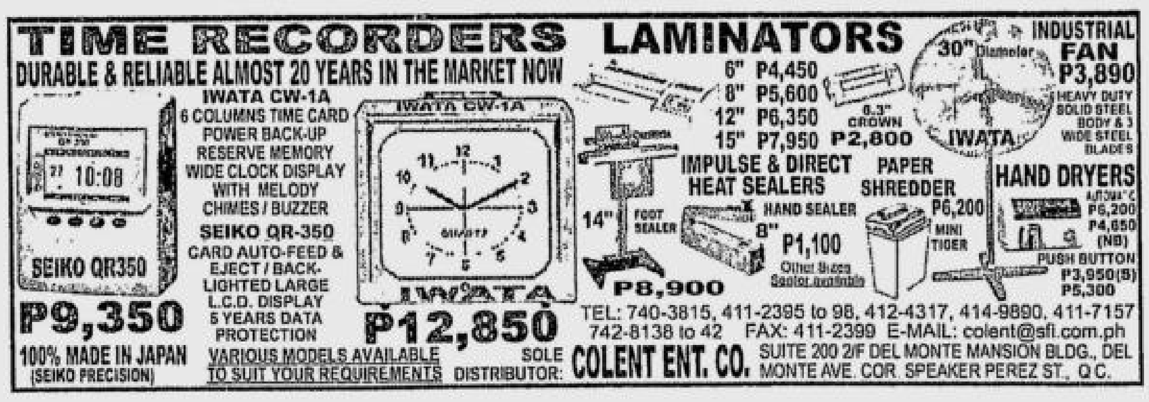
The pilgrim who slipped and suffered minor injuries was identified as Salamula Ali of Buadipuso-buntong, Lanao del Sur.

"Apart from these two incidents, our pilgrims are doing well," said Ampatuan, who had accompanied Lanao del Norte Rep. Abdullah Dimaporo, this year's Amerul Hajj (head of pilgrims).

But Ampatuan reported that more than 1,000 of the 3,147 Filipinos who had joined this year's pilgrimage had been treated for "various illnesses."

Dr. Tahir Sulaik, Maguindanao health chief and head of the medical team for the pilgrimage, said most of those afflicted with mild respiratory infections and colds, "because of the changing weather," were children and the elderly. But he said their needs were being attended to.

Ampatuan said he expected no more hitches. The pilgrimage takes place each year between the eighth and 13th days of Dhu al-Hijah, the 12th month of the Muslim lunar calendar. *Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*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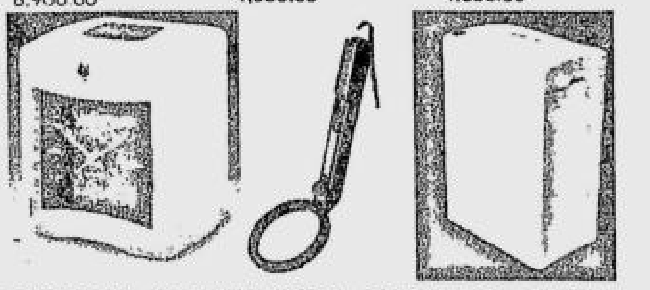
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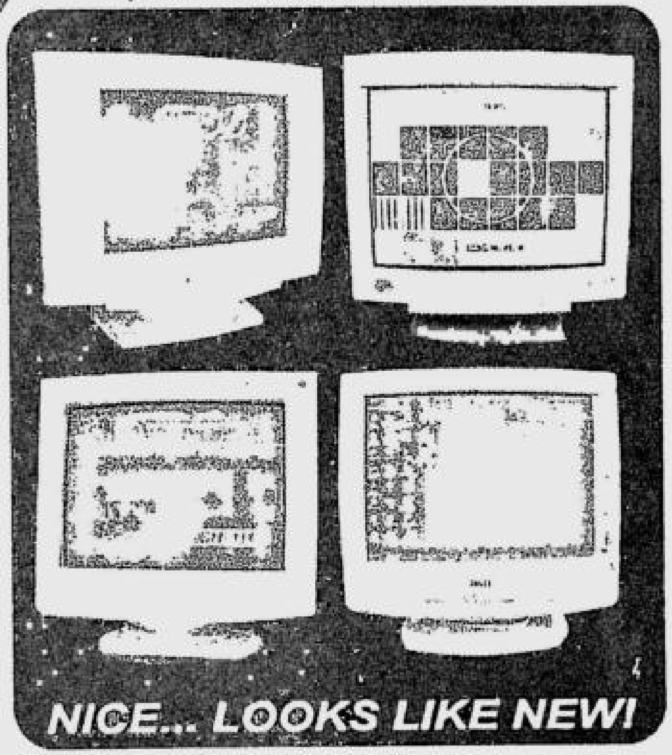
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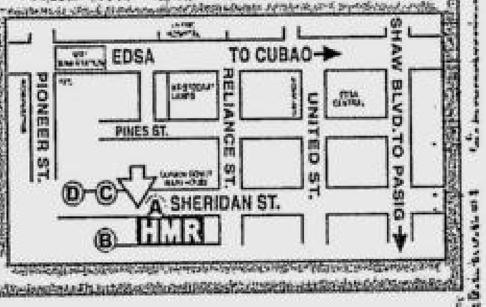

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Mark Jimenez diary details his ordeal in American hands

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

A DIARY purportedly written by Rep. Mark Jimenez detailing the "unimaginably cruel and unjustified" ordeal that he allegedly suffered at the hands of United States authorities is being used as a basis for congressional action in support of the jailed legislator.

Copies of the diary titled "The Ordeal of Mark Jimenez" were attached to letters that Jimenez apparently sent to all House members.

Jimenez complained in particular about the allegedly cruel and inhumane treatment he got from the US Embassy's legal attaché, James Nixon, whom he called "arrogant and scheming."

"It was an affront against not only our Congress but against our judicial system and our close and harmonious relations with the United States. I appeal to you, my beloved colleagues, to help rectify this wrong, not only for my sake but for the sake of the dignity and rights of the Filipino people," Jimenez told his colleagues.

He found a ready ear in Rep. Prospero Pichay, one of two congressmen who accompanied him when he was extradited to the US in December. Pichay obliged Jimenez yesterday with a privileged speech denouncing Nixon and asking the government to have the diplomat declared persona non grata.

New kinks

He also blamed Nixon for the new kinks in Jimenez's case in which the latter, despite being granted bail on the original charges against him, faces more detention time as an extradited alien without proper travel documents.

"Shall we just allow this collective slap on our faces to pass? The whole nation is watching. If they can do this to a congressman, they can do this to the least of our countrymen," Pichay said.

In his five-page "diary" of his extradition to the US, Jimenez related how he "had to eat and drink with my handcuffs on."

He said his ordeal started when he was "turned over" by justice and foreign affairs officials to US authorities at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport instead of inside the Continental Airlines jet which was technically US territory.

"Mr. Nixon confiscated all my handcarried belongings, such as my wallet, rosary, crucifix, bottle of holy water, medicine, sleep apnea machine, watch, triband telephone given by my family to (enable me to) communicate with them and my passport," he wrote.

Apnea medicine

He said Nixon turned over the items, save for his apnea machine, medicines and passport, to his travelling companion Pichay. Bulacan Rep. Willie Villarama also joined the flight but the two of them were separated from Jimenez in Guam.

He narrated his journey thus: "As soon as I stepped into the Continental Aircraft Boeing 767, Mr. Nixon took me to the tail end of the passenger section (economy class). He then ordered me to raise my arms and immediately clamped a metal chain to my stomach and connected it to a handcuff on my wrists. He seated me beside the window of the last row while he sat on the aisle alongside," he said.

He said Nixon assured him that he had made arrangements with the airline for the use of his sleep apnea machine.

"This was a lie. There was no electric connection or socket. This made my flight very difficult because I did not have any other medical equipment. I suffered as a result," he said.

He said he complained to Nixon that the cuffs were too tight, with the metal hurting his skin and bones. He added that he suffered swollen shoulders because there was no space to recline his seat.

Insulting remark

He said Nixon ignored his request to loosen the cuffs twice and agreed on the third request but "then he uttered an insulting remark that was so cruel you would not think it came from a man of the law."

He said Nixon treated him like a prisoner.

"I wondered where my NBI (National Bureau of Investigation) escort was. Were the NBI and DOJ (Department of Justice) part of the conspiracy to subject me to physical and mental torture through inhumane treatment?" he asked.

He narrated how he was taken to Saipan instead of to Miami, Florida where he was indicted for tax evasion, wire fraud, illegal campaign contributions and other offenses.

He said Nixon tried to set up a bail hearing in Saipan, thus depriving him of representation by his lawyers who were waiting in Florida.

While in Saipan, he said he was "detained by Nixon without food and water."

He said that in Guam, Federal Bureau of Investigation agent Clarence Thomas and US marshal Cecil Hakot in Guam treated him better. He said that on the flight from Honolulu to Los Angeles he was able to "breathe and eat freely like a human being" because of Thomas and Hakot.

He said his wife and one of his sons were not able to obtain US visas.

Missing passport

"This is not the America which we know to be just and compassionate (because of) James Nixon, an insensitive and arrogant bureaucrat," he said.

Jimenez questioned why he is to be charged with violating US immigration laws when his departure was facilitated by the US Embassy.

"Where is my passport? It was confiscated by Nixon. The last I heard was that Nixon had lost it. Why is the INS now insisting that I'm an extraditee when the records show that I voluntarily returned to the US?," he said.

Jimenez vowed to return to the Philippines.

"I will prove my innocence. I will prevail . . . God willing, I shall soon be with you, a man free to serve his people, as you are," he told legislators in his letter.

Sandigan rules JV's bank accounts may be opened

SAN Juan Mayor Joseph Victor "JV" Ejercito yesterday failed in his bid to stop state prosecutors from using his bank accounts as evidence in the plunder case against his father, deposed President Joseph Estrada.

The special Sandiganbayan division hearing the plunder case has denied for lack of merit Ejercito's Jan. 28 motion opposing the court's subpoena of documents relating to his savings and trust accounts in the defunct Urban Bank.

The ruling would allow government lawyers to present Ejercito's accounts as additional proof that Estrada, using the alias "Jose Velarde," kept a secret bank account allegedly containing money that he had obtained illegally.

In its resolution, the anti-graft court said the subpoena requested by the prosecution did not violate the confidentiality provisions of the Bank Secrecy Law as Ejercito claimed.

Among the "exceptions" to the confidentiality clause are bank accounts which are sought for disclosure "upon order of the court in cases of bribery or dereliction of duty" involving public officials, the court said.

The plunder case against Estrada was "analogous to the cases enumerated by law" where exceptions to the confidentiality rule can apply, it said.

The court also upheld the prosecution's argument that Ejercito's Trust Account 858 had already been the subject of the testimony of three earlier prosecution witnesses who testified that seven managers' checks from that account had gone to the Velarde account.

"Thus, the subject documents and testimonies, as alleged by the prosecution, will serve as additional proof that accused Joseph Estrada is 'Jose Velarde,'" the court said.

The ruling has caused new delays in the 21-month-old trial, however.

The court suspended proceedings until March 5 to allow the Estrada camp to file a motion within 15 days, while the prosecution was given five days to reply.

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GMA European sojourn on again in March

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo's canceled visit to Europe will push through next month, Malacañang announced yesterday.

Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye confirmed the President will travel to Germany, Spain and the Vatican in Rome, Italy in March.

Ms Macapagal was set to visit Europe last September but she canceled after the Philippines became embroiled in a controversy with Malaysia over the deportation of thousands of Filipinos from Sabah. *D. Pazzibugan*

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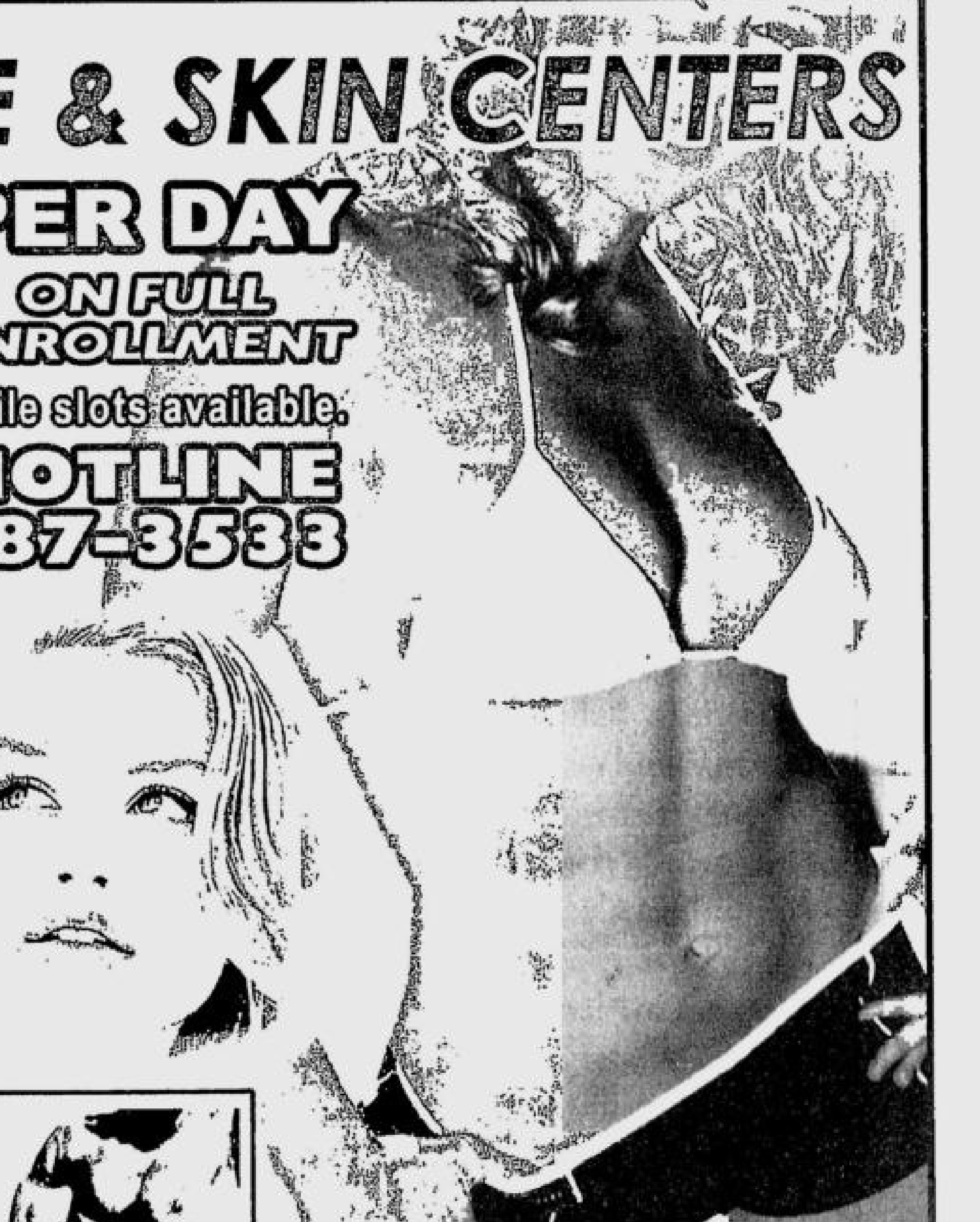

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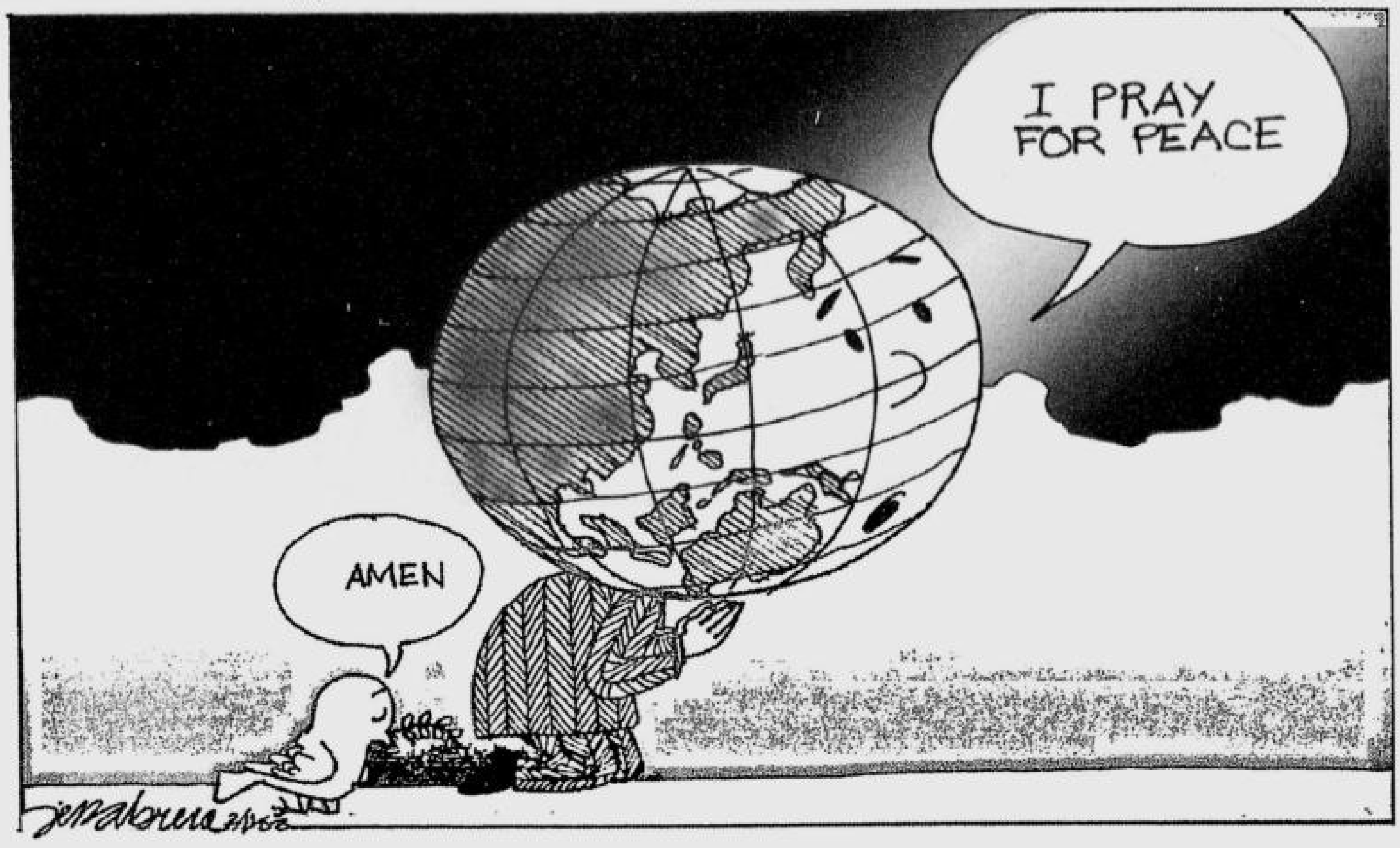


Forest in the city

EDITORIAL

THE DISPUTE between Manila Mayor Lito Atienza and the Manila teachers on one hand and the Winner Foundation on the other over the Arroceros Forest Park has finally reached the court. Yesterday the case was submitted for resolution to the Manila Regional Trial Court. It will now have to rule on the suit filed by Winner member Tina Testa to stop City Hall from taking over the park and building on it.

We hope, however, that whichever way the decision would go, a win-win solution could be found that would benefit the public, the environment and the teachers.

Here is a brief history of the park: In 1993, then Mayor Alfredo Lim, as a member of the city school board, moved for the purchase of a 2.1-hectare lot on Arroceros Street which was owned by the Land Bank of the Philippines. It was to be used for "educational-vocational, parks and playground purposes, among other [things]."

Councilor Bernardito Ang was quoted as saying that the purchase was approved on the understanding that sports and recreational facilities would be built on the land for the city residents. The land was purchased with school board funds coming from the Special Education Fund. This, in turn, comes from 17 percent of the real property taxes paid by Manila residents. The property thus belongs to the citizens of Manila whose taxes paid for it.

In November 1993, with the approval of then President Fidel V. Ramos and First Lady Amelita Ramos, Winner Foundation signed a memorandum of agreement with the City of Manila to create and develop a forest park on the DECS property owned by the city. Landscape architect Wilfredo "Doy" Dizon did the master plan of the mini forest for free.

Winner Foundation members consulted with forestry experts from UP Los Baños, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and Araneta University. Chito Bertol of the Manila Seedling Bank was awarded the planting contract. Workers revived 150 old trees, some of them more than a hundred years old. Manila Seedling Bank planted 3,500 saplings and maintained them for one year, after which Winner took over.

Now, 10 years after the start of the project, the Arroceros Forest Park is a haven of rest and serenity, a thing of beauty, a breathing hole in the concrete and steel jungle that is Manila. Its 3,500 trees attract birds, dragonflies, butterflies and even fireflies at night. Here is how INQUIRER columnist Conrad de Quiros describes it:

"A profusion of green bursts in upon you at the entrance. You walk then underneath a canopy of leaves hanging low from the branches of big trees, spraying shimmering shade into the ground. Vines droop everywhere and give the place an aura of wild lushness."

This, then, is the mini forest that would be disturbed, and probably, destroyed by Atienza's plan to build a teachers' building on the land. Environmentalists and conservationists say that buildings will destroy the forest park because trees will have to be cut and parking areas will have to be set up.

The construction of a building on the land will open it to a lot of human and vehicular traffic with the attendant pollution and noise and activities like eating and vending that could quickly degrade a clean and green area.

The legal issues will have to be resolved by the court. Atienza said that the City of Manila bought the park for P65 million from the Land Bank, using the city government's Special Education Fund. Winner Foundation said that it was given stewardship of the park by the 1993 memorandum of agreement. But the mayor said the agreement was never ratified by the city council. And so the argumentation goes on.

Winner members are afraid that if the park is turned over to the city government, it will suffer a fate similar to that of the Jai-Alai Building which was demolished by Atienza or that of Mehan Garden which was bulldozed by the mayor to make way for a parking facility.

We have no objection to the plan to construct a building for the teachers, whether it be an office building or a dormitory; teachers certainly need all the help and all the facilities that they can get. But can this not be done without destroying a forest park that is now one of the lungs of an increasingly polluted and degraded metropolis? Certainly there must be other pieces of land that can be used for the teachers' building.

Gov't gets from the poor to give to the rich

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE OLONGAPO City regional trial court has stopped the finance and transportation departments from enforcing Executive Order 142 which is now causing sleepless nights for owners of imported second-hand vehicles. The EO requires the owners to get clearances from the Bureaus of Customs and Internal Revenue before their vehicles can be registered. This order includes vehicles already registered after payment of all the necessary taxes and duties. But it exempts vehicles imported by car assemblers under the Car Development Program. Failure to obtain the required clearances will be the basis for the BOC and BIR to seize the vehicles wherever they may be found.

Motorists are howling in protest against the twin orders because they are unconstitutional, discriminatory and confiscatory in nature.

First, EO 142 violates the equal protection clause of the Bill of Rights. Section 1 of EO 142 expressly exempts members of the Car Development Program from the EO despite the fact that they are already enjoying huge tax incentives from the government.

Second, the order empowers the BOC and BIR to "adopt a uniform compromise payment schedule fixing the compromise amounts to be paid by the registered owner of the vehicle in lieu of taxes, duties and fees collectible thereon." This is unconstitutional. Only Congress may fix the amount of taxes and duties, with the exception of the President and local government units, but also subject to limitations and restrictions.

Third, the order covers imported vehicles that have already passed through customs and have been registered by the Land Transportation Office. The order may be *ex post facto*, which is forbidden by the Constitution.

Fourth, the order lays the burden on the owners of already registered vehicles to prove payment of taxes and duties by presenting clearances. The state thereby presumes that the owner has not paid the taxes and duties, which runs counter to the presumption of innocence guaranteed by the Constitution.

Fifth, the requirement is oppressive to the owners of imported vehicles because it requires them, instead of the importers, to prove payment of taxes and duties. Under the National Internal Revenue Code and the Customs and Tariff Code, the person liable for such duties and taxes is the importer. The order shifts the burden to the owners without first amending the laws.

Obviously, the purpose of the order is to harass and squeeze the owners for "compromise payments" to make up for the inability of the BOC and the BIR in meeting their collection targets. But why did it exempt owners of vehicles imported by members of the Motor Vehicle Development Program (MVDP) when the latter are the ones evading payment of correct taxes and duties?

The Board of Investments and the DOF have said that a "car Mafia," allegedly involving some members of the MVDP, has been evading payment of correct taxes and duties on their vehicles by declaring imports as completely knocked-down (CKD) vehicles when they are in fact bringing in completely-built units (CBUs), which are subject to a 30-percent tariff. The car Mafia pays a measly 3 to 7 percent tariff on CKDs.

The car mafia also imports sport utility vehicles (SUVs) as two-wheel drives to avail of lower taxes and duties. It then converts them to 4x4s (4-wheel drive) by installing the transfer case on the transmission and the 4WD axle for the front wheels. Four-wheel drives are supposed to pay P1.2 million in taxes and duties per unit but 4x2s pay only P300,000.

In fact, the government lost P1.5 billion in revenues last year due from Honda Cars Philippines Inc. (HCPI) for 7,477 CR-V vans. Honda had the CR-V reclassified from an SUV to an Asian utility vehicle (AUV). Before this, the CR-V was levied an excise tax of P218,698. After it was reclassified as an AUV, it was exempted from paying any excise tax and the government lost P1.56 billion. How did Honda do it? By merely adding seats, converting the 5-seater into a 10-seater.

The DOF allowed the reclassification (and the loss of revenue) in spite of the fact that the BOI had already rejected Honda's application to reclassify the CR-V from light commercial vehicle (LCV) to AUV. The BOI said that based on Memorandum Order 157, AUV is defined as an "originally Philippine-designed or similarly designed low cost LCV with a higher local content than an LCV and gross vehicle weight of up to three tons" and can accommodate 10 passengers. Despite Honda's claim that the CR-V is an AUV, it is known as an SUV globally.

There are many other ways that the car/truck assembler are cheating the government of taxes and duties. Assemblers are allowed a quota in the importation of CBUs (from 20 to 50 units per product). When the quota is reached, the assemblers are supposed to shift to the assembly of CKDs. They can import only 50 percent of the CKD parts; the other half must be sourced locally. But the assemblers put only the tires and a battery to the unit locally. Under the terms of the MVDP, the assemblers should be actively exporting cars now. They are not.

The assemblers pay taxes on account basis. However, it cannot be ascertained whether the certificates of registration are being liquidated properly. These are just punched into the computers. Records can be easily erased from the hard disk by an "authorized" personnel. This could translate into billions of pesos in revenues lost.

Survival of the fittest

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

LAST week, five cops entered my favorite hangout and went from table to table checking people for guns. They were reasonably civil. *"Di naman ho kami masasamang tao, napaguutusan lang*(We're not a bad sort, we're just doing our jobs)," they told people genially. They found nothing after a cursory search, and left after apologizing for the inconvenience.

I didn't notice this while it was happening. I was with a friend and a couple of foreigners, who were British volunteers. I suspect the presence of the foreigners deterred the cops from intruding into our table. I just learned about it later from my friend who ran the place. He was slightly pissed off, not knowing whether it would signal the start of routine checks of that nature.

I personally would not have minded if they had checked us. They should, in fact, have done so (why exempt foreigners?). I do not mind being frisked at the airport for possible incendiary material. I figure the inconvenience is worth my peace of mind. If they don't check me studiously, they won't check anybody else studiously. I might end up sharing a plane with someone who doesn't particularly care whether he lives or dies.

That should suggest that I was one of those who applauded Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo when she ruled that henceforth individuals might not carry guns outside their homes. That is something Nandy Pacheco has been advocating for an eternity now, and I was elated when, almost after it seemed like it was never going to happen, it happened. It is a good idea, and I cannot understand why barely a week after the President decreed it, she backed down. The pro-gun lobby, of course, which is being ardently supported by Congress, many of the congressmen being steeped in the gun fetish themselves, came out full force to protest it. But why bow to it?

Which is what GMA did. What the left hand giveth, the right hand taketh away. Her original order has now been modified to allow people who are in fear for their lives or safety to carry guns in public. That is the leak in the dike or the crack in the dam that brings the floodwaters tumbling down into a sleeping village. This is a country where the exception has a way of becoming the rule faster than you can say Armalite.

It has no justification. No person in this country, or at least in this crazed city, is not in fear for his life or safety these days. You step out of your house and there is no telling when you could get mugged, raped, robbed, maimed or murdered. The ones at least who are claiming to be in fear for their lives—the politicians, businessmen, merchants and sundry privileged individuals—can go out into the world in tinted cars and in the company of drivers and bodyguards. Most everyone can't. They walk, they commute, they haul their carcasses down the pavement often late at night, prey to all the deviltry this city can conjure.

The exception is the rule. You agree that people who are in fear for their lives or wellbeing may be allowed to carry guns outside their homes, then everyone should be allowed to carry guns. The poor more than the rich. They are the ones in most need of protection. The women who come home late from dives or restaurants, the *balut* vendors who shout their wares in dark corners teeming with drunks and toughies, the nocturnal denizens who doze off in jeepneys or FX taxis at the crack of dawn.

Who are going to protect us from those who carry guns for their protection? The argument presumes that people who carry guns in public are natural defenders of selves and not potential aggressors against others. That is a dangerous assumption. It is also a patently wrong one, as proven by the fact that Jose Luis Llamas, 26, is dead. His killer, a motorcycle-riding businessman, was carrying a gun presumably because he needed it in his profession as protection against robbers and murderers. He used his gun instead to murder a brilliant student and future lawyer in an act of rage. You can argue about guns all you like, but one thing is clear: If Llamas' killer wasn't carrying a gun that day, Llamas would still be alive.

Frank Chavez says he will contest the order proscribing the carrying of guns in public on the ground that it violates the constitutional right to property. Ah, but there is property and there is property. A piano is property, a piece of land is property, a house is a property. A gun—in the hands of private individuals—is not a piece of property, it is a menace. A piano does not fall from the third floor of a building into the head of a passerby every day. A gun does. Weapons of mass destruction are property too, but Bush wants to go to war with Iraq because he believes only America has the right to own them.

True, the ban against carrying guns in public won't stop crime. Not overnight, not by itself. Though while at this, the crime rate did plunge to an all-time low after Ferdinand Marcos disbanded private armies (except his own) and confiscated truckloads of guns immediately after martial law. But the ban can, in conjunction with other reforms, like enforcing higher standards in the recruitment of law enforcers—and forcing current ones to take sanity tests—curb it steeply. The solution to people being in fear for their lives and safety is to demand that law enforcement be improved, not to allow individuals to walk around with guns. The latter, as Pacheco rightly notes, will turn this country into a wild, wild West. The solution to government not being able to provide law and order is to change government, not to allow individuals to take the law into their own hands. There is only one law that will take root from people taking the law into their own hands.

It's called survival of the fittest.

* * *

Comments to dequiros@vasia.com

The North Korea crisis: so close to RP

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

A RECENT editorial in the International Herald Tribune must have raised eyebrows when it said that North Korea's rapidly advancing nuclear weapons program is "the most urgent threat facing America today." This statement must have startled people because the whole world has been so worried about the impending US war against Iraq and that isolated country in the Korean Peninsula seems so distant. Even Manila, three hours away by plane from Seoul, the capital of South Korea, is engrossed with Iraq. But the crisis appears to be very real, and proof is that the Pentagon has put 24 long-range bombers on alert for possible transfer to bases closer to Asia, even as it steps up the buildup of forces in the Middle East. The United States in fact could very well face war on two fronts.

* * *

The North Korean crisis stems from its recent decision to restart its 5-MW plutonium reprocessing reactor in Yongbyon. Experts fear that it may be getting ready to build bombs very quickly. The fear is that by July, North Korea could add five or six more nuclear bombs to the two it already has and some of them could end up being aimed at Seoul which is strongly allied with the United States. South Korea's 48 million population is understandably very jittery about those nuclear warheads as well as North Korea's 1.1 million standing army, 80 percent of which is stationed in the Demilitarized Zone between the two Koreas.

The fear is spreading to Japan across the straits, which is now talking about activating its Self Defense Forces and setting up its own nuke program. Further heightening the tension is the possibility that North Korea, which is in severe economic difficulties, would sell its reprocessed plutonium in Coca-Cola cans to other rogue states such as Iraq or terrorist groups.

* * *

The nervousness stems from the unpredictability of North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il. Its nuclear program was begun in the early 1990s, but President Bill Clinton was able to persuade the North Korean leadership to give it up in exchange for economic support, particularly a massive supply of fuel. But last December, the Stalinist state withdrew from the nuclear non-proliferation treaty to which it was a signatory and followed this up with the expulsion of inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency.

This time, President Bush is hesitant to get into new negotiations with Kim Jong-Il, despite tremendous pressure from his UN allies, lest he appear to be rewarding Kim for bad behavior. But he has little choice, as Kim doesn't want to talk to anyone but the United States. The alternative is for the United States to carry out preemptive attacks on the Yongbyon nuclear plant, but Kim has warned that such an attack would mean a "total war" that would turn the Korean Peninsula into a "sea of ashes." Kim probably would carry out this threat since he has little to lose.

With twin problems like Iraq and North Korea, no wonder Bush has aged frightfully since 9/11.

* * *

It is unfortunate that some demonstrators, who appear to have been bused to the Arroceros Forest Park by people identified with Manila Mayor Joselito Atienza, jeered and heckled the officers of Winner Foundation last week. The fight over the two-hectare park is being painted as another one between the rich and the poor, but it is far from that. The park indeed belongs to the City of Manila since it was purchased with money from the Special Education Fund during Mayor Alfredo Lim's term. A teachers' group said it was bought to serve as the site of school buildings, citing two city board resolutions. However, as Winner Foundation, led by its president, Regina Roces-Paterno, points out, Winner entered into a memorandum of agreement with the Lim administration in November 1993 authorizing it to create and develop a forest park, in accordance with a 15-year development plan approved by the city. The stipulation was that upon completion of the development, Winner will turn over the park to the control and supervision of the city to be run as a forest park. The development plan is on its third phase, which includes care of some 3,500 trees, and Winner has toiled there for nine years now.

* * *

The controversy came to a head when Atienza announced plans to build a building for teachers. Winner protested that this is contrary to their development plan, but a news report quoted Atienza as saying he does not recognize the MOA since it was was not ratified by the city council. Winner spokesperson Tina Testa said the 1993 city council was then headed by Atienza as vice mayor and he should have taken steps to ratify it. Now the forest park has been padlocked, locking out Winner and the public. This is truly regrettable, as it shows that the city government has little respect for a valid MOA.

* * *

Instead of setting the poor against the rich, which is so reminiscent of Erap, Atienza should encourage the participation of the affluent who are working truly for the welfare of the less fortunate who stand to benefit most from the few open spaces with living trees in the metropolis. One of the founders of Winner was my classmate at the old Holy Ghost College, Gloria Cantillo Cardenas, who, in her deathbed, entrusted the park to Paterno and other leaders of Winner. Like the other ladies, Gloria was motivated only by a desire to serve the less fortunate.

Atienza is obviously obsessed with his building program, counting on it to get him the votes in 2004 and beyond. But Arroceros Park is part of the city's lungs. There are a number of existing buildings which can be used for the teachers, but there are few open spaces left for Manilans to enjoy.

Letters of love

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

I WASN'T really surprised to receive a call from Susan de Guzman, who together with Giselle Kasilag, put together last December an exhibit on "Love Letters," to tell me that the exhibit would be remounted in other venues in time for Valentine's Day.

I'd always thought the exhibit—composed of letters, cards, notes, poetry and even e-mail from Filipino writers to their loved ones—would have been better timed around this season. One of the more innovative touches of the exhibit was an "interactive" site, a corkboard on which exhibit-goers were asked to stick their own romantic missives. Though initially shy, those who came to "eavesdrop" on the romantic correspondence of lovers young and old eventually got over their reticence. By the second day of the exhibit, say Susan and Giselle, the corkboard was nearly entirely covered by hand-written notes, including one memorable (though anonymous) marriage proposal.

At the exhibit "Café Juan Soy in Love," an expansion of the Vargas Museum exhibit with additional contributions, most notably from the late National Artist for Literature NVM Gonzalez and his widow Narita, some of the letters can be read beneath romantic canopies of woven rope and Tivoli lights. Others are inside envelopes nestled in baskets, which customers can take out and read at their leisure. Photos of the correspondents are encased in varied picture frames, giving the café, at the ground floor of Greenbelt 1, a most homey, intimate look.

* * *

IT'S a more formal, institutional look at the "Love Letters" exhibit at the Manila Central Post Office. But somehow, the letters seem more at home there, among the thousands of humble citizens still trooping to this grand old building to drop or pick up mail.

I was a guest at the opening of the exhibit yesterday, along with Narita Gonzalez, Postmaster General Diomedio Villanueva and former Postmaster Tagumpay Jardiniano, whose letters to and from his wife are included among the "proofs of love."

Felipe Hidalgo, assistant postmaster general and head of marketing and business development, said they thought of mounting the exhibit to encourage the public to write more letters and to continue using the mail system. Anyway, I was asked to share some thoughts at the opening and here they are:

* * *

IT'S an honor to address this celebration of the rapidly disappearing, if not entirely lost, art of writing love letters. Indeed, one of the most pleasurable activities when one has fallen in love is to put one's thoughts and feelings into words. These heady times call for reflection, for an examination of one's deepest feelings and values.

We seek urgently an answer to the question: Will this be the person I want to spend the rest of my life with? A literary critic once said that "the search for the beloved is the search for oneself." For in the beloved we try to find the one person who will reflect and validate everything we hold dear.

Our love letters are the expression and the record of this search. One of the exhibitors, Tanya Lara, says love letters allow us to say what we cannot say to our lover's face, for fear of being too corny. Another writer, A.S. Byatt, in her novel "Possession," a fictional epistolary romance of two Victorian poets, puts it another way: "And did you find—as I did—how curious, as well as very natural, it was that we should be so shy with each other, when in a papery way we knew each other so much better? I feel I have always known you, and yet I search for polite phrases and conventional enquiries—you are more mysterious in your presence...than you seem to be in ink and scribbled symbols..."

I must confess a bias for letters written with ink and on paper, though technology allows us so many other means of communication these days. Still, there is nothing to compare to the thrill of receiving an envelope, digging out the letter inside, and discerning, in the flow and curve of script, hidden meanings, secret symbols, unsaid declarations. Letters are also a more permanent record of love, ready to be dug out, unfolded and reread at one's leisure for many years hence.

In closing, let me share with you a portion of a letter, though fictional, written by one of the romantic poets in "Possession." A.S. Byatt may have written the words, but I like to think of them as coming from a poet's heart. I personally wouldn't mind receiving such a letter in the mail.

* * *

"...I MUST say to you what is in my mind. The unforgivable embrace was no sudden impulse—no momentary excitation—but came from what is deepest in me, and I think also what is best. I must tell you—ever since that first meeting, I have known you were my fate, however from time to time I may have disguised the knowledge from myself.

"I have dreamed nightly of your face and walked the streets of my daily life with the rhythms of your writing singing in my silent brain. I have called you my Muse, and so you are, or might be, a messenger from some urgent place of the spirit where essential poetry sings and sings. I could call you, with even greater truth—my Love—there, it is said—for I most certainly love you and in all ways possible to man and most fiercely. It is a love for which there is no place in this world—a love my diminished reason tells me can and will do neither of us any good, a love I tried to hide cunningly from, to protect you from, with all the ingenuity at my command. (Except complete silence, you will rightly say, which was out of my power.) We are rational nineteenth-century beings, we might leave the coup de foudre to the weavers of Romances—but I have certain evidence that you know what I speak of, that you acknowledged, however momently (that infinite moment) that at least what I claim is true."

Let us remember Feb. 12, 1945

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

ON FEB. 12, 1945, no Mass was celebrated at De la Salle College on Taft Avenue because the shelling from American guns was so intense it would have been dangerous to gather all the refugee families in the chapel. Aside from the 17 Christian brothers and seven staff members, there were four families quartered in the south wing of the main building. So there were over 50 people there.

Among the families there were those of Judge Jose Carlos, Dr. Antonio Cojuangco, including a son-in-law, Servillano Aquino, who was newly married to Trinidad Cojuangco, D. Enrique Vazquez-Prada with his wife and four sons, Dr. Clemente Uychuico, the younger brother of Mrs. Carlos and Mrs. Cojuangco, with his wife and children. Shortly after lunch about two dozen Japanese entered the building to begin the massacre.

The chaplain of the De la Salle community, Fr. Francis Cosgrave of the Redemptorist Order in Manila, was giving absolution with his arm raised when the bayonet struck Brother Leo who was kneeling. The brother fell against Father Cosgrave who was then stabbed to death. Brothers Lucian, Gebhard, Paul and Hubert scrambled up the stairs. Brother Baptist de la Salle grabbed Jose Carlos Jr., 3, as his mother Juanita fell from a rifle shot while running up the stairs. Behind the mother was Cecilia Carlos, 12, and two maids, Juanita and Felisa. The girl was shot and died as she reached the chapel doors. Felisa was slightly wounded and picked up the boy where Brother Baptist had managed to hide him before he died. Juanita had a finger shot out but was otherwise unhurt.

At the chapel door were Rosario Carlos, 21, beside her sister, Asela, 20, and two maids, Fortunata, 14, and Regina. A Japanese marine shot her from three feet away, the bullet entering the left side of her chest. She remained conscious and heard the shots and screams of terror. Asela and Fortunata were subjected to bayonet stabs and saber blows. Asela's arms were almost severed and Fortunata was fatally wounded. In the midst of that carnage, Regina merely suffered a scratch.

In a room beside the chapel, Antonio Cojuangco, 17, was recuperating from typhoid. With him was his male nurse, Filomeno Inolin and his father, Dr. Antonio Cojuangco, as well as the newly weds, Servillano and Trinidad Aquino. Although they had locked the door when the shooting and screaming began, Inolin opened it when the Japanese started banging on it. He was told to run around and as he did so the Japanese stabbed him repeatedly. Dr. Cojuangco ran toward the chapel but was overtaken by another Japanese. Aquino was also asked to turn around, but having witnessed what happened to Inolin, he lunged at the Japanese who bayoneted him first in the chest and finally in the neck. The sick boy who could barely stand was dragged out of the room and stabbed twice. Aquino's body was dragged along the floor. His 18-year-old bride of one month rushed toward him only to be shot and then struck repeatedly with a bayonet. Perhaps the Japanese saw that Aquino was still alive and forthwith stabbed him twice more. Mercifully, he lost consciousness.

Inside the chapel at the communion rail, a wounded Brother Maximin shouted, "They are going to kill us all!" Brother Anthony tried to stem Brother Maximin's bleeding. At the door were Brothers Lucian, Lambert and Hubert. Brothers Mutwald and Victor crouched between the pews. Gebhard and Paul were on the floor in the middle rows. The three brothers at the door were mutilated when they fought off five Japanese led by an officer. The rest of the brothers either bled to death or from the trauma of their wounds. Antonio Carlos, 6, sped out of the confessional only to be chased by a Japanese who stabbed him in the back and lifted the body up in the air then dashed it to the ground.

Of the Vasquez-Prada family, the first to fall were the three older sons: Enrique Jr., 24, Herman, 20, and Alfonso, 13. The youngest Fernando, 5, was wounded slightly only because his mother, Elena Loewinsohn Vasquez-Prada, attacked the Japanese. Fatally wounded, a chunk of her thigh hacked off, the fingers of her hands sliced and stabbed in the stomach, she fell on her son, saving him. But Elena did not die at once. It took a couple of days for her to bleed to death just as the Americans liberated the college.

Enrique Vasquez-Prada, 59, half-paralyzed from a stroke, crept out of the bathroom on the second floor when an eerie silence settled on the dead and the dying. With the sound of the shelling going unabated, he made his way to the staircase made slippery with blood, looking for his family. He found his three eldest sons dead, his wife dying. Picking up his youngest son, Enrique went up the stairs where a team of Japanese found him feeding his son. In front of his son, he was bayoneted to death. The boy crawled back to his mother in the foyer.

By the entrance to the building the Japanese made merry, drinking and singing boisterously. At various times, they would return to see if anyone was alive.

* * *

Fifty-nine years later the Battle of Manila is nearly forgotten, with not a single monument to remember it by in the city. A dozen or so years ago, it occurred to the Department of Foreign Affairs that February was the perfect month to celebrate Filipino-Japanese Friendship Month. So tomorrow on the anniversary of the massacre of the innocents, De la Salle University begins the celebration. You'd think there aren't any other months in the year.

Priesthood of the laity

YOUNG BLOOD

Zandro G. Rapadas

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

RECENTLY we have seen great blessings unfold one after the other in the local Catholic Church, particularly in the Archdiocese of Manila and the Diocese of Antipolo.

There was the creation of the new dioceses of Novaliches and Parañaque in December and the installation of their new bishops, Teodoro C. Bacani Jr. and Jesse Mercado. Last month, we played host to the biggest family reunion held for the first time in Asia: the Fourth World Meeting of Families, which challenged Filipino families to be at the forefront of spreading the good news of salvation and become living witnesses of Christ's selfless love in the third millennium. Last Jan. 29, the Diocese of Antipolo received the gift of a new pastor with the installation of Bishop Gabriel Reyes, formerly of Kalibo, Aklan.

All these were occasions for celebrating God's manifest favor to his people, but some in the media took it otherwise. They interpreted the division of the Archdiocese of Manila as a way of emasculating Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin and considered it as a blow to the old prelate, whom many resent for allegedly meddling too much in politics. They cried foul over what they claimed to be discrimination against the local media in the coverage of the Fourth World Meeting of Families and left unreported the meaningful proceedings.

Sadly, they also ignored the highlights of Bishop Reyes' installation in Antipolo and instead reported on the scandal allegedly involving his predecessor, Bishop Crisostomo Yalung, who resigned from his office in December.

In my view, the local media, particularly some reporters covering Church affairs, have been utterly unfair. While we do not expect them to always write favorably about the Catholic Church, we nevertheless expect a fair coverage. And while I am aware of the dynamics of newspapering, I still maintain that writing is a vocation that takes its essence and character from the splendor of truth that is found in Christ alone, our first and model Communicator.

That is why I am saddened when some journalists dismiss the Church beat as just one of their news sources and write about its affairs as if it had no spiritual dimension. Yes, I dare invoke this aspect because man has both body and soul, and hence even his concerns have both temporal and spiritual aspects.

When we write about the Church and its affairs, we inevitably affect the faith of our readers, either for good or evil. And when we write for a publication that has a big readership, the responsibility grows even bigger.

Fr. James Reuter, S.J. has said that the mass media could be a powerful tool for good as it is for evil, but the decision lies in the hands of the media owners and practitioners. "Media can bridge the gap between life and faith, and media practitioners should see to it that they not only present the perspective of mass media, but also that of our faith," he said.

But what happens if a reporter wants to prove that he is a staunch critic, an adversary even, of the institution he covers? Does objective reporting have no place here?

Although journalists are concerned with uncovering the whole truth and nothing but the truth, there may be times when communicating the whole truth may do more harm than good. I share the opinion Teresa Chooi, president of the International Catholic Union of the Press, that journalists should know the limitations on the communication of facts and respect them. "Reverence for the truth sometimes requires silence as well as the protection of the weak and respect for legitimate privacy. There are times when the demands of charity and justice outweigh the right of the general public to know. The public does not have the right, still less the need, to know everything about everybody," Chooi said at the Jubilee of Journalists and Communicators in Rome in 2000.

There is also a big difference between the right to know and people's curiosity about salacious information. When some speak about acting "in the public interest," this often means revealing certain facts to sell more papers, Chooi added.

Writing about the truth and fair reporting inevitably leads me into a brief discussion of Catholic journalism and the Catholic Mass Media Awards (CMMA).

The CMMA is an institution that honors media with conscience. A victory in the CMMA is not only just another feather in one's cap but more importantly an affirmation of solidarity with the Christian values that CMMA espouses.

Writing about the Church and matters of the faith is like hearing the Gospel: those who hear it become changed persons. We can either heed the message and become better persons, or dismiss it and continue to wallow in ignorance and folly.

In basic writing, we talk about the five W's and the "how" in our structure. My stint in the Archdiocesan Office of Communications allowed me to see the heart and soul of journalism and to learn from Fr. Lito Jopson its most important guidepost: What is it for?

Indeed, after coming up with a well-written article, a journalist should ask himself: "What have I achieved with my story?"

If we can answer this without any trace of selfishness and know in our hearts that we have done it to make a difference in this world, then we have found the jewel of mass media.

The Church beat offers reporters and editors the profound experience of being mesmerized by the truth that liberates and makes us appreciate and become more faithful to this vocation which we call social communications, the priesthood of the laity.

Zandro G. Rapadas, 27, is a freelance Catholic journalist.

THEY SAID

Real picture

"No statistics can better illustrate the real labor situation than this."

—Baguio-based Dr. Charles Cheng on the hordes of applicants who responded to a job vacancy ad

Vital remittances

"Remittances are always a factor in keeping the peso stable."

—Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura

Power without honor

THE HOUSE of Representatives' vote to dismiss the impeachment complaint against Comelec Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco showed that many of them acted the way we expected them to.

But idealists and dreamers that we are, and after working so hard to convince many of our representatives to just have the complaint investigated, we had hoped for the best but we were greatly disappointed.

Time and time again, citizens have not failed to call the attention of our Representatives to issues of serious concern like the Tancangco case, thus giving them the opportunity to redeem their very poor public image and bad reputation (as proven by the latest MBC survey among businessmen). But our representatives have elected not to listen and act.

How in the world are we going go trust them to change our Constitution by convening as a constituent assembly? NO WAY!

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Give us a break! What good is power without honor?

—EVELYN LAO-KILAYKO,
chairperson,
MA. THERESA F. NIEVA,
honorary chair,
Concerned Women of the Philippines, 265-C Katipunan Avenue, Loyola Heights, Quezon City

Too many holidays costing RP plenty

DO you know that every time we have a holiday, we lose something like 180 million productive man-hours? This was computed on the basis of 21 million SSS members and 1.5 million GSIS members (a total of 22.5 million) multiplied by eight working hours per day. So, if our country has 10 holidays per year, we are losing a total of 1.8 billion productive man-hours.

In terms of money lost, at an average of just P200 minimum salary per day multiplied by 22.5 SSS and GSIS members, the loss would be P4.5 billion a day or P45 billion a year (for the 10 holidays per year). I said "lost" because this P45 billion will be paid to these 22.5 million SSS and GSIS members anyway even if they do not render service during these holidays.

So let us not be surprised if our country is lagging far behind, economically speaking, vis-à-vis our neighboring countries in Asia. Based on reports, I think Vietnam is already ahead of us and if we don't watch out, Bangladesh will beat us too in no time.

We are indeed a holiday-loving people but we are paying dearly for it.

—PAUL R. MORTEL,
MBLA Court, Malanday,
Marikina City

Have rebels become less human?

THE BURNING of a public market in Kalawit, Zamboanga del Norte, by suspected New People's Army speaks of their total disregard for the welfare of ordinary civilians.

Think of the hundreds of the people who lost their livelihood because that commercial establishment was burned. How about the residents who were left homeless by the fire? What about the psychological effects of this traumatic experience on the children?

Do communist rebels cease to be human beings? Aren't the "causes" of the masses the ones they are supposed to be fighting for? Are they not worried that with these continuous criminal activities they will lose the support of ordinary folks? Why do they impose their revolutionary taxes on middle-income earners?

How will these people pay their "*butaw*" now that their source of livelihood is gone?

—LLANA MARIE V. CASTILLO,
3577 Old Sta. Mesa, Sta. Mesa, Manila

Right moves by GMA

I CONGRATULATE President Macapagal-Arroyo for her bold decision to revert to English as our medium of instruction. I see it as a great move toward restoring our edge as a nation.

I anticipate Ms Macapagal making these right moves from now on:

1. She will concentrate totally on her job as Chief Executive with a tight deadline.
2. She will keep to herself all her opinions about politics.
3. She will pursue in her new style of governance the principle of subsidiarity.
4. She will harness the many talents of the Filipino.
5. She will remove government meddling on our privacy and respect the freedom of families to raise and educate their own children.

Then history will mark her as the post-war leader who brought back common sense and common decency to our beloved land.

—MANOLI DE LEON,
Polk Street,
North Greenhills,
San Juan, Metro Manila

English and our future: a sequel

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

TWO weeks ago I wrote about how our Asian neighbors were intensifying their English language training programs as part of their attempts to enhance their global competitiveness.

By coincidence, a few days later the President announced that English should be adopted as the medium of instruction in elementary and high schools. She explained that we needed to do this to improve our science capabilities and that this would, in turn, make us more globally competitive.

At first pass, all that sounds reasonable but when you think hard about the problem, and the proposed solution, you'll find the fit isn't quite right.

Let's look first at the level of our science and math skills. The last time we participated in an international evaluation was in 1995, with the Third International Mathematics and Science Test (IMST3). This was administered to 13-year-old children in 42 countries. The results? In math, we ranked 39th and for science, we ranked 40th.

Among other Asian countries that participated in the IMST3, Thailand ranked 21st in math and 23rd in science. There were four other Asian countries that participated and they ran off with the highest ranks for the tests: Singapore ranked 1st in both math and science, South Korea was 2nd in math and 3rd in science, Japan was 3rd in math and 2nd in science and Hong Kong was 5th in math and 22nd in science.

There's no question then that we are quite weak in our science and math, trailing behind Asian neighbors. But does this relate to our poor grasp of English? I don't think so. Note that of the four countries that did best in the IMST3, only Singapore uses English as a medium of instruction in schools. South Korea and Japan both use their national languages as the main medium of instruction in school while Hong Kong mixes Chinese and English.

There's more evidence to show that science and math skills are not tied to English proficiency alone. The Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which is composed of the world's 32 leading industrial nations, recently conducted an assessment of 15-year-old students' reading, mathematical and scientific literacy.

Again, we find non-English-speaking countries leading in the OECD assessment. The 10 countries that had the highest average scores, which I'm giving in parenthesis, were Japan (543), South Korea (541), Finland (540), Canada (532), New Zealand (531), Australia (529), Britain (528), Ireland (514), Austria (514) and Sweden (512). The three countries that fared best do not use English as their medium of instruction.

The acquisition of science and math skills involves more than the use of English. Common sense tells us the problem in the Philippines with math, science and nearly every other subject one can think of is that we're not providing enough for our schools, to train teachers, to pay them decent wages, to make books, laboratories and equipment available.

The President's announcement does allow us to tackle this question of a medium of instruction. Here, it'd be useful to look at a position paper dated Feb. 6 and endorsed by several faculty organizations and departments of the University of the Philippines, the Philippine Normal University and Ateneo de Manila University. The paper points out that the President's announcement about English as being "in complete disregard of scientific and modern learning principles."

What are those principles?

First, a child learns faster in his or her native tongue. That makes sense, especially when it comes to learning science and math with so many abstract concepts. In the Philippine setting, that native tongue is Tagalog or a local one such as Cebuano, Ilokano or one of our many other languages.

If I remember right, the Department of Education issued an order not too long ago allowing the use of the local language, not necessarily Filipino, for instruction in Grade I and II, which was a good move when you look at the second "learning principle" cited in the position paper: A child easily learns a second language if he or she is already literate in the native language. I would modify that to say, a child easily learns a second language, as well as other skills such as those in math and science, if the native language is used.

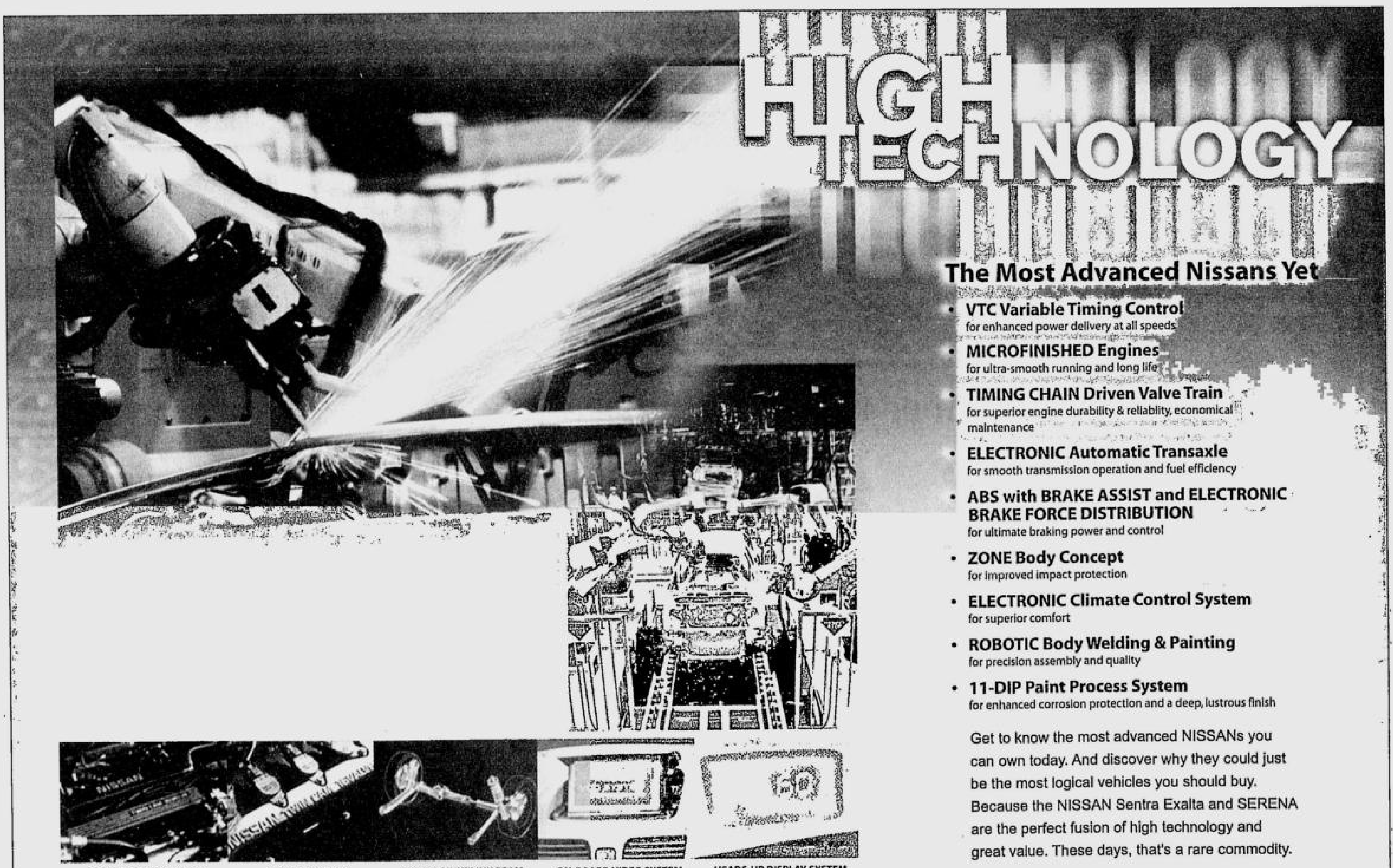
We have to start somewhere and that beginning point should be whatever language most of our children are comfortable with when they start school. In the Philippines, that language is not English but Filipino or a local language.

There's no denying that English is an important common language used for international trade, politics, science, but the English proficiency that's needed will vary depending on what area one works in. As I pointed out in an earlier column, the Chinese are recruiting Filipinos to teach English in China, not with the aim of acquiring perfect spoken BBC English but of reaching a reasonable level of reading and writing comprehension that will allow them to access and use Western advances in information technology.

The position paper from UP, PNU and Ateneo suggest that Filipino be the sole medium of instruction at the primary level, with English introduced at the intermediate level. I would like to see more exploration of possibilities on how local languages might be used at the primary level, if at least to teach Filipino itself. I would also be open to seeing English introduced even before high school.

Our language policy in schools will have to depend on a more thorough study of our goals and objectives, as well as our current resources. Let's face it, you can't push English, as the President is doing, when the teachers themselves, including college faculty, aren't comfortable with the language.

Ultimately though, we need to be more introspective about our use of languages. Many countries see English as a way of accessing the world's knowledge and skills so these can be used for national development goals, goals which are conceptualized and articulated in many documents in their local languages. In the Philippines, we still see English mainly as a way of making Filipinos more marketable in the international labor market. There's a world of a difference between the two perspectives.



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Top US agenda for Iraq: Democratic gov't

WASHINGTON—The US agenda for post-war Iraq includes a new government, food, health care and democratic change for its struggling population, but no firm reform timetable, a top White House official said.

National Security adviser Condoleezza Rice on Sunday, however, denied the undertaking would rival in scope the post-World War II demilitarization of Japan supervised of Gen. Douglas MacArthur.

"I don't think that the Douglas MacArthur model is really the appropriate analogy," said Rice, a top adviser to President George W. Bush, on CBS's 'Face the Nation' program.

The program calls for laying the foundation of a democratic government system in Iraq within secure borders.

If the United States does "have to go to war," Rice said, Washington "has no interest in removing one dictator and replacing it with another dictator. The Iraqi people deserve better than that."

Once gunfire dies down, the United States will help Iraqis set up a representative civil administration free of the "influence" of the era of President Saddam Hussein and capable of running the country, she said.

"We would hope that very early on you could begin to identify Iraqi leadership from within the country and from without, people who underneath this terrible totalitarian government still have the respect of people and could help to lead it," said Rice, without disclosing names or selection procedures. *AFP*

Bush traces war policy to Sept. 11

WASHINGTON—President George W. Bush says the Sept. 11 attacks redefined America's approach to international affairs and increased the urgency of dealing with growing threats abroad.

"Prior to September the 11th, there was apparently no connection between a place like Iraq and terror," Bush said Sunday at a policy conference of Republican members of Congress at a West Virginia resort.

Bush said the United States used to be confident that Iraq was not a threat to the American homeland because "we were confident that two oceans could protect us from harm."

But, Bush added, "the world changed on September the 11th."

"Obviously, it changed for thousands of people's lives for whom we still mourn. But it changed for America, and it's very important that the American people understand the change. We are now a battleground. We are vulnerable."

That, he said, is the reason "we cannot ignore gathering threats across the ocean."

"It used to be that we could pick or choose whether or not we would become involved," the president said, but the direct potential of an attack on the United States has changed that philosophy.

Iraq has fooled the world for more than a decade about its banned chemical and biological weapons and the United Nations now faces "a moment of truth" in disarming Saddam Hussein, he said. AP

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12 opposition activists in Burma nabbed

RANGOON—Burma's military government said on Monday it had arrested 12 opposition activists for plotting to create unrest in a further sign of deteriorating relations between the ruling generals of the pro-democracy movement.

The military intelligence spokesperson, Brig. Gen. Than Tun, said seven of those arrested were low-level members of the National League for Democracy (NLD) of Nobel Peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, which won elections in 1990 by a landslide but has never been allowed to govern.

Also in the group was Sai Nyunt Lwin, secretary general of the Shan National League for Democracy (SNLD), which was the second most successful party in the 1990 elections, winning more than a dozen seats.

Than Tun told a news conference the group had distributed anti-government leaflets and had been planning demonstrations and other "disruptive activities." He said investigations were continuing and other arrests could follow.

Asked by reporters if the arrests would affect relations with the opposition, Than Tun replied: "We need to see how the legally existing parties respond to the illegal activities of their members." He declined further comment.

Diplomats predicted a new era of reconciliation for Burma last May when Suu Kyi was released from 19 months of house arrest following intense international pressure and secretive contacts between the two sides brokered by the United Nations.

But there have been few signs of progress since then and the government and opposition have begun to criticize each other in public again after a pause for more than a year.

Last month two Buddhist nuns were arrested in the capital for protesting against surging prices and for calling for political change. *AFP*

OSAMA STILL HOT ITEM

T-shirts sporting images of Osama bin Laden, the World Trade Center disaster and pop stars compete for space in a traditional souvenir shop in the Bahrain capital of Manama on Feb. 9. The shop's salesmen said such souvenirs were popular items. REUTERS

China cuts embassy staff in Iraq

BEIJING—China on Monday showed fraying nerves about potential losses from an Iraq war as it cut its Baghdad embassy staff and warned Mideast hostilities could cause a drastic drop in export growth.

As war drums beat louder in the region, the foreign ministry decided to call home all personnel from its Baghdad embassy who are not urgently needed, Xinhua news agency reported.

"We're hoping for peace in the region, but at the same time are preparing for the worst," China's Ambassador to Iraq Zhang Weiqiu said, according to the China Daily.

The Chinese Embassy in Baghdad has established a registration system, enabling it to be in close contact with the estimated 160 Chinese nationals in the war-threatened country.

While the situation gets tenser by the day, the embassy said it had no plans yet to ask all Chinese citizens to leave the country.

"Now the situation is still developing," an unnamed official from the embassy said.

However if war erupts and Chinese nationals have to get out of Iraq hastily, they will receive help from Chinese diplomats in neighboring Jordan, previously an exit point in times of war.

"Jordan is the backyard of the Iraq crisis," said Chen Yonglong, China's ambassador to Jordan. "In case of war, the embassy will provide every possible means of assistance to Chinese crossing over to Jordan."

Chinese economic forecasters are worried that a US-led war in Iraq could contribute to a steep drop in trade growth this year.

Exports, which rose by 22.3 percent in 2002 from the year earlier, could see much more modest growth of as low as 5 percent in 2003, the China Daily said, citing local economists.

Topping the list of concerns are uncertainties generated by the prospect of war in Iraq, according to Wang Yiming, a senior researcher with the State Development Planning Commission.

A global slowdown triggered by hostilities in the Middle East is almost certain to impact Chinese exports to markets in the United States and Europe, according to observers.

China's economy might also get hurt by war in Iraq because of its growing dependence of imported energy, much of it from the Middle East.

China has been a net importer of petroleum products since 1993 and of crude oil since 1996.

Beijing said last September that the threat of war in Iraq had forced it to speed up plans for a strategic oil reserve.

An unnamed official then told state media that the reserve could initially top six million tons by 2005—the equivalent to about one-tenth of China's imports in 2001. *AFP*

There's no proof North has nukes, says SK premier

SEOUL—South Korea highlighted on Monday how it differs from the United States in viewing North Korea when the South Korean prime minister said it had never been confirmed the communist North has nuclear weapons.

US Secretary of State Colin Powell reiterated on Sunday on NBC television that Washington believed Pyongyang had already produced one or two and that the present standoff was aimed at thwarting the North's efforts to make more.

"We think they may have one or two weapons. We have every reason to believe that," Powell said, according to NBC's website.

Speaking at the South Korean parliament's first full session since the Dec. 19 presidential election, Prime Minister Kim Suk-soo said he believed the North did not have nuclear weapons.

"It's been said that North Korea had as much plutonium as to make one or two nuclear weapons before 1994 but it has never been confirmed that they have produced or owned any nuclear weapon," Kim said in a televised question and answer session.

Neither Washington nor Seoul has provided proof one way or the other, but their different emphasis is significant as President-elect Roh Moo-hyun prepares to take office on Feb. 25 with a mandate to keep the South's conciliatory approach to the North going.

Foreign Minister Choi Sung-hong said in parliament the United States had not discussed a military option against the North. US President George W. Bush has reiterated he seeks a diplomatic solution to North Korea's nuclear standoff.

The South Korean comments came hours before European Union foreign policy and security chief Javier Solana, now in Tokyo, was due to fly to Seoul. He will meet President Kim Dae-jung and President-elect Roh on Tuesday.

Economic officials from both Koreas, technically at war as their 1950-53 conflict ended in a truce instead of a peace agreement, are also due to resume discussions in Seoul on Tuesday on how to step up economic exchanges.

Those talks continue despite the diplomatic tensions over North Korea's suspected nuclear weapons ambitions.

Since last December, North Korea has expelled UN nuclear inspectors, removed seals from a mothballed reactor and pulled out of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

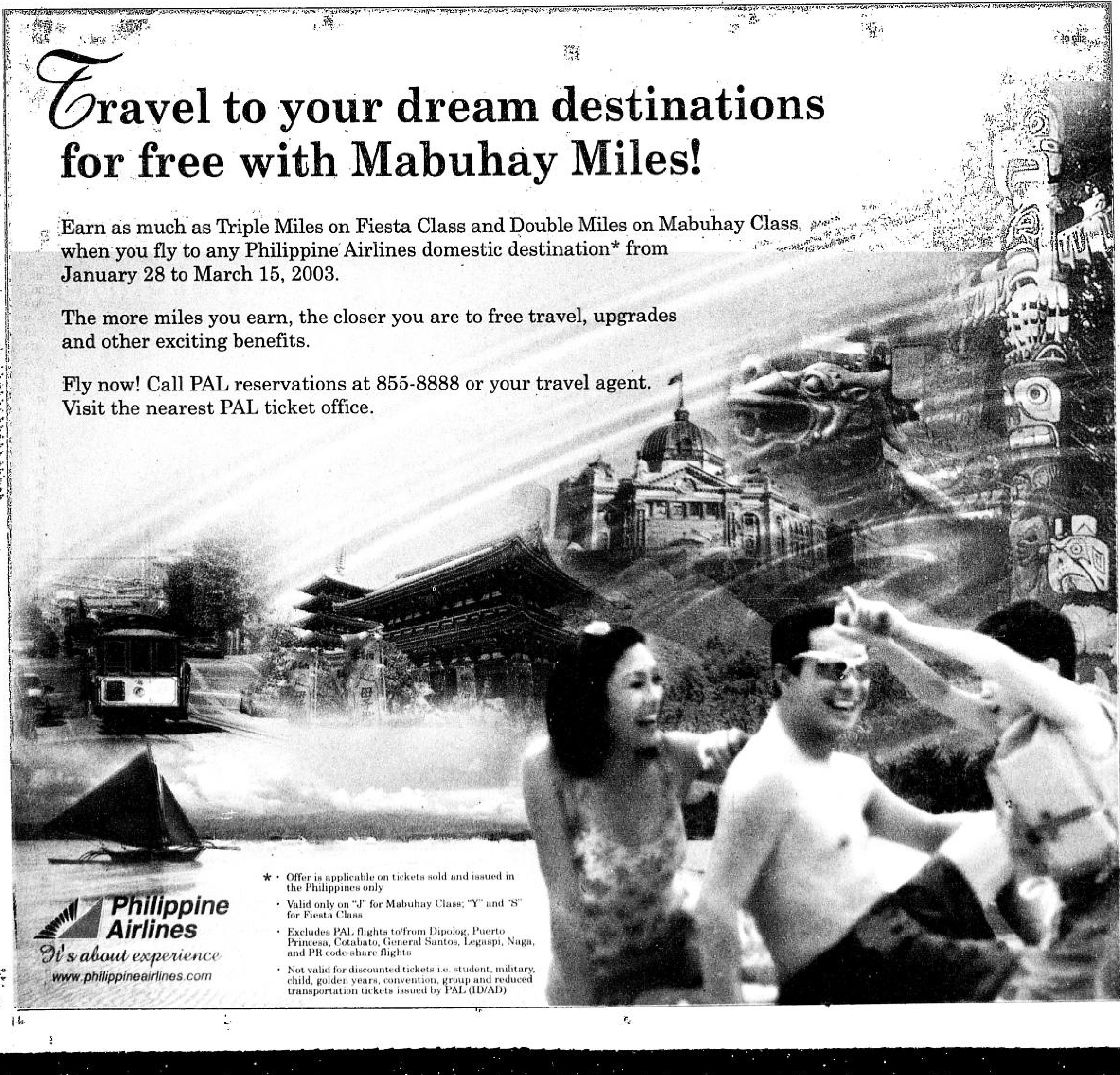
The International Atomic Energy Agency is scheduled to decide on Wednesday whether to refer the nuclear crisis to the United Nations Security Council.

The EU ambassador to Seoul, Dorian Prince, said Solana would separately meet Kim and Roh and that the timing of the EU's planned mission to North Korea might be influenced by the outcome of discussion between Solana and South Korean leaders.

"I think a lot depends on what comes out from this meeting with President Kim Dae-jung and with President-elect Roh tomorrow," Prince said.

Greece said on Friday the European Union would decide in several days whether and when its delegation would visit North Korea, but it did not say if the decision would be linked to any specific event. The trip had been scheduled for Feb. 11-12.

The North Korean crisis erupted last October when the United States said North Korea had admitted reviving a nuclear arms programme it had agreed to shut down. *Reuters*



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Chavez threatens to send striking oil workers to jail

CARACAS, Venezuela—President Hugo Chavez said he would not offer amnesty to thousands of oil workers fired for leading a two-month strike against him and urged prosecutors to indict them for sabotage.

More than 9,000 workers have been dismissed from state oil company Petroleos de Venezuela S.A. since a national strike began on Dec. 2 to force Chavez to step down or agree to early elections.

Opposition leaders agreed to lift the strike in all areas except oil last week.

"There is no rehiring. They are not just fired, they must be indicted," Chavez said Sunday, calling on the attorney general and judges to administer justice. "Punishment for those responsible for all the damage they have done to PDVSA and the country!"

Chavez said Venezuela's penal code allowed for jail terms of up to five years for those convicted of damaging strategic installations such as ports, oil pipelines and refineries. He said many striking workers had not only abandoned their posts but also sabotaged oil operations.

Dissident executives from PDVSA deny sabotage charges. They say replacement workers hired by the government lack qualifications and are incompetent, hence delays in restarting the industry.

The opposition has held several marches supporting the fired oil workers and also say they collected 2.5 million signatures of support.

The government claims most of PDVSA's 40,000 employees have returned to work. Strike leaders deny this, saying thousands refuse to return to their posts until Chavez rehires the 9,000 fired and agrees to an early vote on his rule. Another 900 were fired over the weekend, local daily El Universal said Sunday.

Still, the oil industry—the world's fifth-largest supplier before the strike—is slowly recovering. Chavez, who spoke at the El Palito refinery in western Venezuela, said production is at 1.9 million barrels a day. This compares to over 3 million barrels a day before the strike and just 200,000 at the height of the strike. *AP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Shuttle probe

SPACE CENTER, Houston—Investigators are searching for evidence that a block of ice big enough to damage Columbia's wing may have formed on a waste water vent, a problem that plagued an earlier shuttle flight. They also are looking closely at what may be two key pieces of Columbia debris—a 60-cm piece of one wing, including an attached chunk of thermal tiles, and a 135-kg cover of a landing gear compartment, possibly the site of a sudden temperature rise moments before the shuttle broke apart. One day after Columbia's Jan. 16 launch, military radar detected an object moving rapidly away from the shuttle. Nasa said it was unknown what the object was, but the possibility that it could have been ice from a waste water vent sent investigators back to a detailed search for evidence that the shuttle may have formed ice throughout its mission. *AP*

Israeli violence

NABLUS, West Bank—Israeli soldiers shot and killed an unarmed Palestinian fugitive in a West Bank refugee camp Monday after he tried to escape arrest and hid on a rooftop, Israeli and Palestinian sources said. The violence erupted hours before Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon was to launch his first round of negotiations to build a stable government from a smattering of parliamentary factions that have conflicting demands and interests. *AP*

US spy convicted

BEIJING—A Chinese court convicted US-based dissident Wang Bingzhang of spying and terrorism on Monday and sentenced him to life in prison, the government announced. Activists abroad rejected the charges as false and politically motivated, and appealed for Wang's release. Wang, 55, a Chinese citizen, was arrested after police said they found him tied up in a temple on July 3 in what Chinese authorities called a ransom plot. However, pro-democracy activists suggested he was abducted in Vietnam by Chinese agents after he secretly met with Chinese labor leaders in Hanoi. *AP*

Aceh peace zones

JAKARTA—Six new demilitarized zones were established Monday in the Indonesian province of Aceh in a bid to shore up a fragile peace agreement between rebels and government forces, officials said. The announcement brings to seven the number of "peace zones" in the embattled province and comes days after rebels from the Free Aceh Movement offered their schedule for disarming. *AP*

Haj climax

ARAFAT, Saudi Arabia—More than two million Muslim pilgrims began pouring into the plains of Arafat on Monday for the climax of the annual haj—praying for forgiveness and for Iraq to be saved from a threatened US attack. They arrived from Mina, about 7 km away, by foot, in buses and in small vehicles and pickups, to the pilgrimage's most significant site, under an extremely pleasant weather. "Here I am Allah, answering your call; there is no God but you," the sea of humanity, all dressed in white, chanted as they approached Arafat, where the Prophet Mohamad delivered his last sermon 14 centuries ago. *AFP*

Rat disease

CANBERRA—Experts warned on Monday that rat-borne diseases were on the rise as towns and cities spread in developing nations. Researchers from 39 countries attending a second international rat summit in Australia said the much-loathed rodents were known to carry nearly 70 diseases, but there were fears they could harbor scores more. "Rats are a reservoir of disease, the sleeping giants of disease in the world," Dr. Lyn Hinds, of Australia's Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, said. "It is more likely than ever that we will have greater levels of debilitating diseases caused by rats... with the increased density of human populations." *Reuters*

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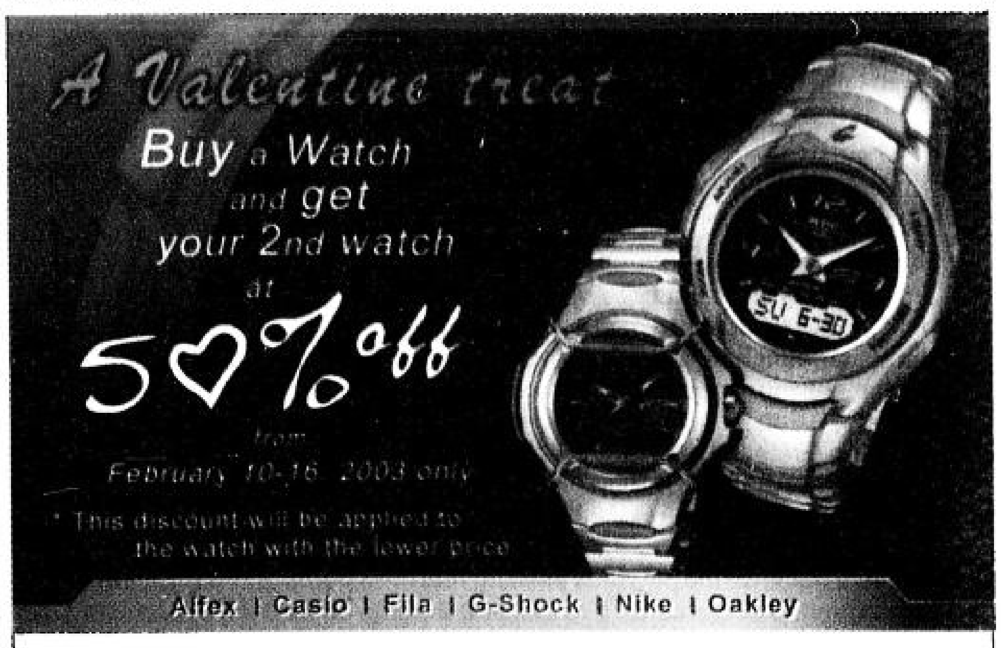
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The real score on the TESDA mess

While a fact-finding inquiry by the Board of Trustees of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) into allegations of corruption and irregularities in the issuance of artist record books (ARBs) and on the misuse of TESDA funds is going on, a well-funded media campaign is being undertaken to praise supposed innovations introduced by TESDA Director General Dante Liban in the skills assessment system for aspiring overseas performing artists (OPAs), which are being passed off as "reforms".

The "reforms" supposedly improved the credibility of the system but led to the decline in the deployment of OPAs because the previous passing rate of 95 percent decreased to 55 percent. It is claimed that the decline in deployment has drastically cut the multi-million-peso corruption, compelling the "Mafia" in the industry to engage in a vilification campaign to discredit Director General Liban in media and in the eyes of the President.

In the interest of truth and for the purpose of achieving true reforms in the OPA assessment and certification, the Board of Directors of the Philippine Association of Recruitment Agencies Deploying Artists (PARADA) is issuing this statement in order to clarify the issues.

1. THE ARB SYNDICATE

As provided for in Department Order No. 10 Series of 2001 of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), the policy governing the training, assessment, certification, processing and deployment of OPAs, the assessment and certification of OPAs are administered by TESDA through the accredited testing venues, testing officers, and the OPA Operation Center.

In August last year, less than two months after Director General Liban assumed office, he took out the organic employees of TESDA from the OPA operations and replaced them with job contractuals whom he plucked out from the 2nd district of Quezon City where he once served as congressman. The job contractuals were led by Larry Galgana, a political ward of Liban in Novaliches, who was entrusted with the highly sensitive job of farming out testing schedules and assignments and of processing and issuing ARBs.

Parallel to this, Director General Liban resurrected the position of Test Administrator in charge of supervising the conduct of skills assessment at testing venues. He then appointed his people from the 2nd district of Quezon City as Test Administrators. This was followed by his appointment of a group of testing officers led by one Nagget Aquino who is also from Novaliches, Quezon City.

Immediately after his people were put in place, reports of irregularities have surfaced: test results are being tampered in favor of unqualified applicants and ARBs are being sold at P25,000.00 apiece. This was followed by the imposition of new rules requiring applicants who already passed skills assessment to undergo revalidation and directing re-hired OPAs with expired ARBs to undergo reassessment.

Thus, instead of addressing the backlog in the issuance of ARBs that at the time of his assumption of duty had piled up to about 20,000, Director General Liban adopted measures that created bottlenecks, making it difficult for deserving applicants, including those who passed skills assessment in 2001 to obtain ARBs. Such measures aggravated the backlog and even caused the cancellation of hundreds of booking contracts of deserving applicants and re-hired OPAs. As a result, they were deprived of jobs and incomes for them and their families.

If the purpose, as Mr. Liban claims, is "to make the ARB a sacred attestation of an OPA's skill," why were the organic employees of TESDA, who are well-versed in skills training and assessment, taken out and replaced by people of dubious qualifications who cannot be held accountable?

2. LOW PASSING RATE

Mr. Liban takes pride in the decline of the passing rate in skills assessment from 95% to 55%. He claims that this is due to his effort to attain excellence in the Filipino artists' performance to the extent that aspiring OPAs can be developed in the mold of a Leah Salonga or a Lisa Macuja. This is pure hogwash.

Since the time that the ARB system was adopted to regulate the deployment of overseas performing artists, the passing rate of 95% has never been achieved. This is true in the past administrations of TESDA and, for obvious reasons, under the present administration of Director General Liban.

In truth, the licensed recruitment agencies are not gravely affected by the low passing rate since there are sufficient numbers of qualified ARB holders to fill up the need of the entertainment market in Japan. But what we find disturbing is the fact that the head of a government agency involved in job generation is gloating over a high failing rate of job applicants who underwent training under the TESDA-approved and supervised program. The effectivity of a training program is measured by a high passing rate, not otherwise.

Can we really produce Leah Salongas and Lisa Macujas from among ARB holders many of whom did not pass the skills tests but were able to leave for abroad by "buying" their ARBs?

The real distressing fact is that the so-called "reforms" of Mr. Liban have served as obstacles for deserving applicants to be certified and that there are rampant reports of ARBs being sold to unqualified applicants at the unconscionable cost of P25,000 per booklet!

3. INVESTIGATION OF ARB IRREGULARITIES

In September last year, PARADA provided Director General Liban with copies of documents that would prove the existence of irregularities in the conduct of skills assessment. Notwithstanding his self-serving press release stating that he endorsed the documents to the NBI for proper investigation, nothing has been heard about the case.

On October 30, 2002, we again presented to Director General Liban copies of five ARBs that were obtained by applicants who had each paid P25,000.00 for the documents. We requested for a joint viewing of the video coverage of the skills assessment purportedly administered to the said ARB holders. He turned down our request but promised us that a prompt investigation would be conducted. Five months have since passed and the probe he promised is yet to start despite our three follow-up letters. All we got is the flimsy excuse from retired Brig. Gen. Nestor Castillo, current chief of OPA operations, that the investigation can not push through because he had misplaced his notes of our October 30 meeting at which the names of the five ARB holders and other pertinent ARB data were provided.

4. UNLAWFUL ACCREDITATION OF TESTING VENUES

In November last year, Mr. Liban started granting accreditation to nine additional testing venues. His unilateral action did not pass through the standard procedures for accreditation as mandated by TESDA Order dated 15 August 2001 amending TESDA Order No. 304 and 386. It also violated a provision of Department Order No. 10 Series of 2001 requiring only a limited number of testing venues for OPA assessment.

The accreditation of the nine additional testing venues was consummated after the six testing venues accredited before Director General Liban assumed office were deprived of testing schedules because of their dispute with his technical assistant and consultant. The dispute is now the subject of graft charges filed by the six venue owners before the Office of the Ombudsman against Director General Dante Liban and Messrs. Larry Galgana and Vic Jose. In the joint affidavit of the complainants, it was alleged that the six venues were not given testing schedules after their owners refused to pay a substantial amount of money demanded by Larry Galgana and Vic Jose.

5. APPOINTMENT OF UNQUALIFIED TESTING OFFICERS

Mr. Liban is claiming that he invited the academe from the UP, UST and NCCA to sit down as testing officers in order to ensure that only true performers will be certified and issued ARBs. And in support of such claim, he dropped several names of noted performers and entertainers. The truth, however, is that simultaneously he appointed as testing officers persons who do not possess the required experience in the field of dance and music. It is interesting to take note of the complaint from equally known artists and performers, like Maggie dela Riva, Annie Rivera and Heber Bartolome, that the appointees of Mr. Liban are given preference in the allotment of testing assignments simply because they have signed a manifesto in support of Liban's so-called "reforms". No wonder that up to this time, despite our repeated requests, Mr. Liban has failed to come out with the TESDA list of testing officers indicating their experience and qualification.

6. ARB INVENTORY

Through constant communications and countless dialogues with Mr. Liban, we made a request for an inventory of ARB disposition for the period of July to December 2002. It was a sincere effort made in the spirit of transparency and to dispel allegations of misdoing in the issuance of ARBs. But what we were given was a mere statistical summary of ARB issuances that excluded the names of ARB holders, skill endorsees and ARB serial numbers. We find it quite strange that a government official professing decency and forthrightness could not give due consideration to a simple request coming from industry stakeholders whom he is fond of referring to as government partners.

7. DEVOLUTION OF OPA ASSESSMENT

Last month, upon knowing that PARADA was about to spearhead a rally to demand his resignation, Director General Liban issued an Advisory inviting concerned industry sectors to take part in the convening of a Technical Working Group to formulate a policy for "devolving the function of OPA assessment to the industry." We saw through the deception; it was meant to divide our ranks and waylay us from pursuing the foremost goal of investigating the ARB irregularities. Our apprehension was confirmed by the DOLE on January 24, 2003 when it came out with an official clarification that any major change in policy as regards OPA assessment and certification will have to be approved by the TESDA Board. And that any amendment to Department Order No. 10 Series of 2001 can only be undertaken by the Labor Secretary. It is quite clear that Mr. Liban does not have the proper authority to "devolve the OPA assessment to the industry" and his widely publicized readiness to give up said function is but a ploy to cover up the larger issues of corruption and irregularities.

In his column yesterday, Mr. Neal Cruz mentioned the existence of a multi-billion-peso racket at TESDA. That is correct, and the racketeers are operating under the very nose of Mr. Liban.

This is the racket that we in PARADA want investigated to the end that the culprits are exposed and charged. This is the same racket that two employees unions of TESDA are up against. To say that recruiters are involved in the racket is barking the wrong tree.

There is no anger in our demand for the removal of Director General Liban. As things stand now, it is clear that he has lost the moral ground and the trust and confidence of concerned sectors, most especially the organic employees and career officers of TESDA, who are staging daily protest actions against him for alleged mismanagement and corruption.

His persistence to hold on to his position despite the popular clamor for his removal is becoming quite embarrassing for President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and a baggage to her reform agenda, most especially her declared war on corruption.

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French, German opposition irks US

From page A1

weights incurred the fury of the United States, which called them "inexcusable" and a threat to the future of Nato and the UN Security Council.

US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld also denounced the move by France, Germany and Belgium as "a disgrace" and said countries blocking the plan to reinforce Turkey's defenses would be condemned by their own people.

The rift within Nato came as top UN arms inspectors Hans Blix and Mohamed ElBaradei left Baghdad after two days of talks in which they saw "good progress" from Iraq in cooperation with UN disarmament demands.

Washington and London have accelerated their deployment of troops, warships and aircraft to the Gulf region in preparation for a war on Baghdad to topple the regime of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, whom they accuse of hiding weapons of mass destruction and of having links with al-Qaida.

Turkey, Nato's only Muslim state and its only member bordering Iraq, could be one of the staging points for a US-led attack.

But France and Belgium say boosting Nato's defenses would send the signal that war with Iraq had already started.

The French and Belgians voiced their objections before a deadline on Monday, after which the 19-member alliance would have proceeded automatically to reinforce Turkey's defenses if no state opposed this.

"We have decided to break the procedure of silence this morning," Belgian Foreign Minister Louis Michel told France's Europe 1 radio.

Michel said he had just spoken to French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin. France is a veto-wielding member of the UN Security Council, along with the United States, Britain, Russia and China.

A Nato official said Turkey could still take the unprecedented step of invoking a clause of the Nato treaty to call for mutual assistance for a member country under military threat.

"All bets are off—it's difficult to predict what will happen," he said.

France, Germany and Belgium refused to go along last week with Nato's efforts to boost defenses in Turkey.

"A disgrace"

Rumsfeld told eight European newspapers in an interview that "certain member countries" would be condemned by their own people and other members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

"Certain member countries have blocked this request. I think this is a disgrace," Rumsfeld said, according to the French text in Le Figaro. "These countries will be judged by their own people and the other members of the Alliance."

Rumsfeld said Turkey had asked Nato to give it protective measures such as Patriot anti-missile batteries, Awacs surveillance planes and equipment to counter chemical and biological weapons.

Diplomats said the standoff at Nato was a glaring symptom of the malaise in relations between the United States and countries that Rumsfeld had labelled "old Europe."

Britain, Washington's main ally in the Iraq crisis, has backed the tough US line on using force to disarm Baghdad if Iraq will not disarm itself. Spain, Italy and east European nations waiting to join the bloc have also rallied behind Washington's stance, but France, Germany and others have opposed any rush into war.

German Defense Minister Peter Struck said last week that Paris and Berlin wanted to back up inspections with UN troops and would outline the plan to the UN Security Council on Friday when Blix and ElBaradei are due to give their next update to the council.

Russian President Vladimir Putin was to fly into Paris on Monday for talks with French President Jacques Chirac about the Franco-German initiative.

After meetings in Berlin on Sunday, Putin said: "All those who follow the evolution of the situation in Iraq can see that France, Germany and Russia are almost completely in agreement."

Change of heart

After weekend talks with senior Iraqi officials during which they were handed documents about anthrax and missile programs, Blix and ElBaradei said they had found "a change of heart" from Iraq.

"We made good progress . . . We are leaving with a sense of cautious optimism," ElBaradei said, but added that Iraq had yet to prove a more proactive approach.

"We need to see Iraq eager to comply and not failing to comply," he said.

Blix said "cooperation on the process had been good," but the Iraq's commitment to the substance of November's UN resolution had been "less good."

That ambiguous evaluation was further tempered when one of Saddam's advisors, Gen. Amer Al-Saadi, said two Iraqi scientists had turned down requests to be questioned abroad by UN weapons inspectors.

Blix also said he was not satisfied with the list of scientists provided to him by Iraqi authorities.

British Defense Secretary Geoff Hoon told the Guardian newspaper that Blix would have to declare Iraq was in non-compliance with the UN resolution—thus triggering Security Council consultation of "serious consequences" which could lead to war.

"My judgment is that he will have to indicate the failure of Iraq to cooperate as they are required to do," Hoon said.

He added that there was a strong case now for a second UN resolution authorizing military action against Iraq.

US Secretary of State Colin Powell said Sunday that Washington and London were already working on such a resolution, and that it could be submitted Friday.

US President George W. Bush has insisted, however, that he reserves the right to go to war against Iraq without an explicit UN mandate, but that if he is forced to do so, the United Nations could become irrelevant.

Reports by AFP and Reuters

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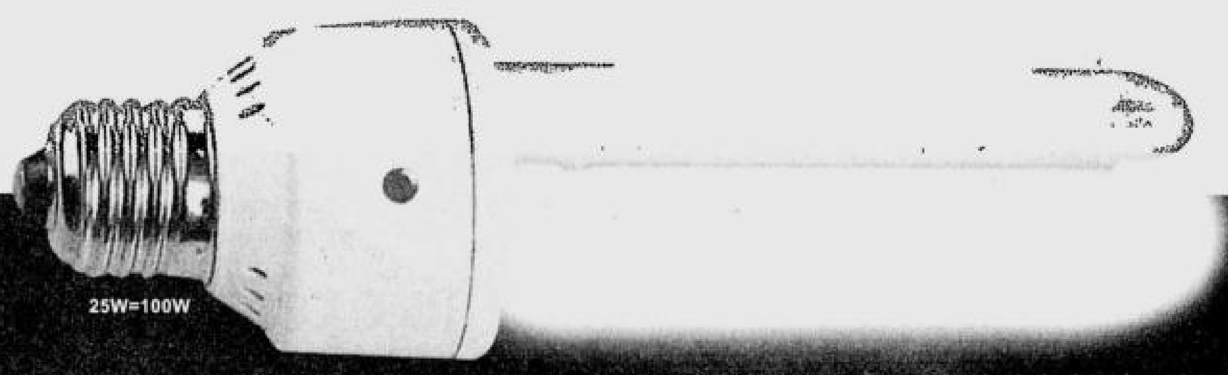

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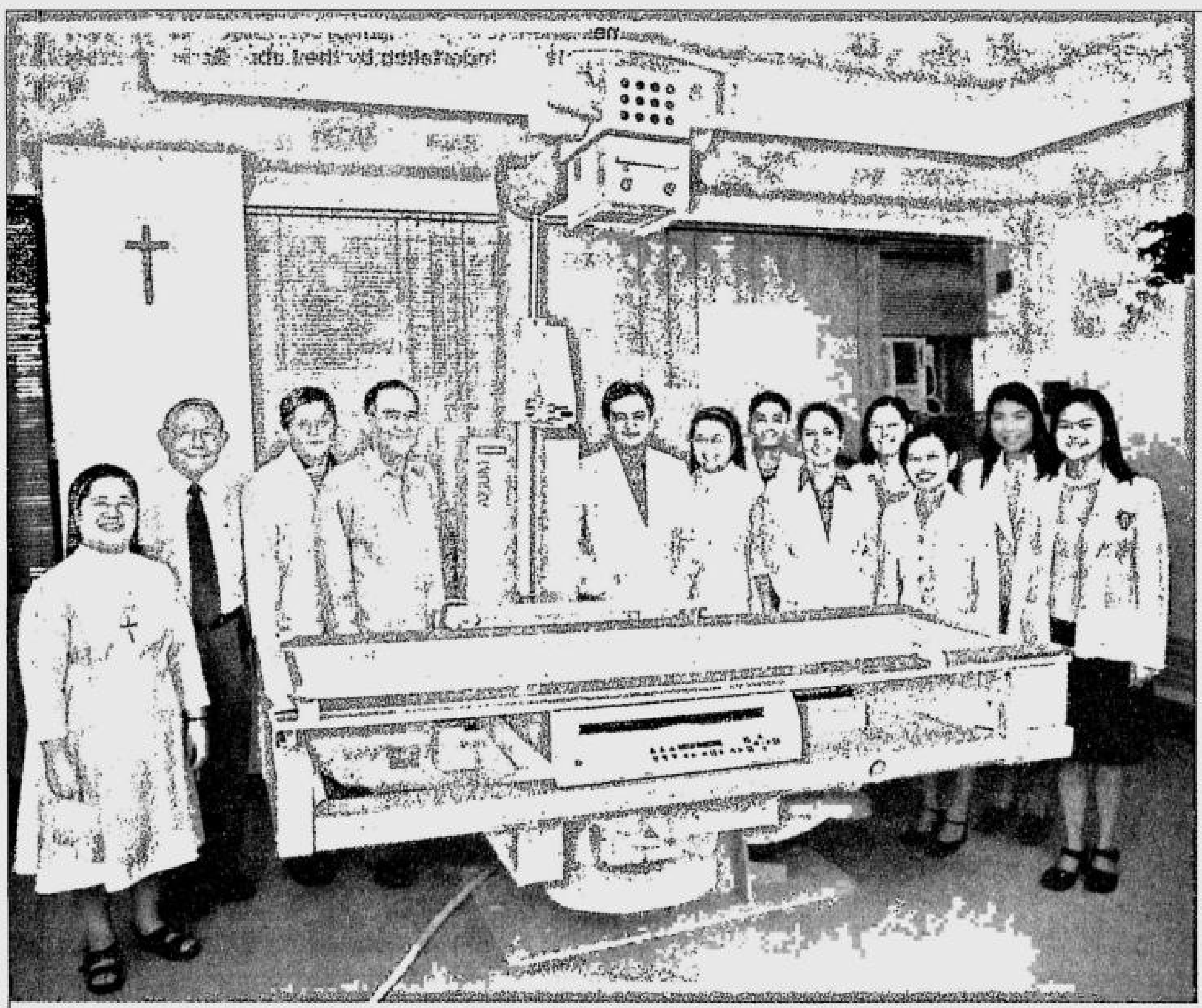

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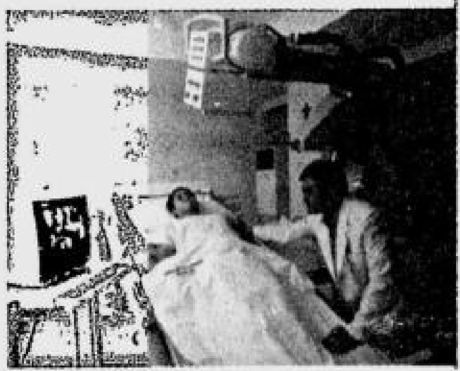

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More Pinays leave RP for Japan

By Desiree Caluza, *PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

BAGUIO CITY—By the end of 2001, 74,000 Filipino women had left for Japan with the hope that they would experience a better life, according to a Manila-based women's rights advocate group.

Andrea Anolin, project coordinator of Batis Center for Women, said 2,500 Filipinas leave everyday for Japan to work as entertainers, but most of them become victims of violence by their employers.

The Batis Center for Women, a support group of distressed Filipino migrant workers returning from Japan, presented statistics of victims of violence against Filipina workers in Japan.

The group called on the government to protect the welfare of workers and migrants abroad who were victims of abandonment, sex trafficking, abuse and exploitation.

"In the '70s and '80s, it was the Filipino men who would leave the country. But after 2000, a big number of Filipinas would leave for abroad. This is where the problem started," Anolin said in a forum here.

"Even with the much publicized cases of abuse and violence, Filipinas go to Japan to earn bigger income,"

She said the government should protect the workers in Japan and not only look at them as objects of labor export market.

The Batis Center for Women expressed alarm over the continuing trend of what it called as "feminization of migration" in Japan despite tales of cases of violence against women workers.

Olivia Cervantes, Batis executive director, said they documented 351 cases of abuse in 2001.

Abandonment of Filipino wives and Filipino-Japanese children dominated the abuse cases, which rose to 170. Other cases were domestic violence, sexual trafficking and unfair labor practices.

The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration said 7.29 million overseas Filipino workers are scattered in 187 countries.

Out of the 2,700 OFWs who left the country in 2001, 72 percent were women. Starting 1990, the OFWs' annual remittances have risen to more than P1 billion. In 1996, remittances amounted to $4.30 billion.

In 2000, OFWs remitted $6.05 billion, a 71 percent increase from 1996.

Cervantes said most Filipinas who migrate to Japan come from poor areas of Davao, Cebu, Bicol and Pangasinan.

TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

BAGUIO CITY officials need not look far to confirm the poor quality of air in the country's summer capital. They need only to drive through or walk on Session Road where parking attendants are protected from poisons in the air through filter masks.

Baguio execs piqued by WB report on pollution

BAGUIO CITY—The report that Baguio is the most polluted city in the country has forced local officials to gasp for air.

Mayor Bernardo Vergara berated the reporter who broke the story in a national daily in front of Interior Secretary Jose Lina Jr. when the mayor delivered his State of the city address on Feb. 3.

Baguio Rep. Mauricio Domogan also criticized the report as "irresponsible" in a privilege speech at the House of Representatives last week.

Also that day, the city council called on Environment Management Bureau (EMB) officials to explain the World Bank's 2002 study on air quality, which got its data from EMB-Cordillera.

The city has reason to be angry because it boasts of being a Hall of Fame awardee in the clean and green program for highly urbanized cities.

The city will also host the 7th Panagbenga Festival later this month and the report on the city's air quality came at a bad time, Domogan said.

But a closer look at the World Bank's 36-page Philippine Environment Monitor 2002 will show that everyone may be right and only differ on the report's interpretation.

In fact, it should be Benguet that should cry foul because the province, according to the report, is more "polluted."

The controversial report used data that showed that Baguio indeed has the highest concentration among the four biggest cities sampled, based on PM10 or particles smaller than 10 microns.

PM10 are considered dangerous because they can enter the inner parts of the lungs, causing respiratory illnesses.

The calculation of PM10 was made from the total suspended particulates (TSP), which are a complex mixture of dust, smoke, mist and dust droplets emitted into the air.

The World Bank study showed that Baguio City had a TSP level of 250 microgram per normal cubic meter (ug/ncm) in 2001, which was similar to Quezon City's level. In 2000, Baguio's TSP level was 275 ug/ncm.

These figures are much higher than the annual TSP guideline set at 90 ug/ncm.

Benguet, it turned out, had the highest measurement by far with 450 ug/ncm in 2001.

The WB acknowledged that the reading in Baguio was not due to pollution alone.

"This is partially due to an increasing urban activity and the unfortunate meteorological conditions that limit dispersion and result in higher pollution levels," the World Bank report said.

Zamboanga City has the highest TSP reading, reaching 500 ug/ncm, but the results were invalidated for "incorrect sample collection procedure." *Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

MALACAÑAN PALACE
MANILA
[message]

It is my distinct pleasure to greet the Philippine Gamma Knife Center (PGKCI) on the occasion of its 5th Year Anniversary.

Your unwavering commitment to uplift the standard of healthcare and to remain globally competitive amidst the rapid changes in technology is truly commendable. Your desire to keep abreast with the latest trends and issues in neurosurgery will greatly complement our government's efforts to address the health needs of our countrymen.

Join me in strengthening the bedrock of a strong Republic by ensuring that all Filipinos will live healthy and productive lives. Let us triumph over the ills of disease and poverty.

Tulong-tulong nating itaguyod and isang matatag at malusog na Republika!

Mabuhay!

GMArroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President of the Republic of the Philippines

The ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCHBISHOP
MANILA
[message]

I send my warm greetings and congratulations to the Philippine Gamma Knife Center of the Cardinal Santos Medical Center on your 5th Anniversary. Jesus came to heal and save. His healing is not just physical but wholistic. This is also my ardent wish for our Gamma Knife Center. May the patients and even the doctors and staff who come here experience and share the healing love of our Lord. May this center be a dwelling place of love and compassion.

I impart my paternal blessings to all of you. Your work at the service of our brothers and sisters becomes a fitting gift to the Lord who is the very meaning of every human effort. May He always guide and inspire you and all your endeavors.

A Grace-filled Anniversary! God bless you always!

+ Jaime Card. Sin
+JAIME L. CARDINAL SIN, D.D.
Archbishop of Manila

CARDINAL SANTOS
MEDICAL CENTER
[message]

I extend my warm congratulations to the management of the Gamma Knife Facility on its 5th Year Anniversary. Founded in February 1998, under the exemplary leadership of Dr. Eduardo Mercado, it is the only facility of its kind in the Philippines in this area of medical science. Since then, 800 patients have been treated successfully. This figure is quite remarkable considering that there are about 180,000 patients who have already been treated all over the world since the Gamma Knife Technology was started some 30 years ago.

I am aware of the trust of management of encouraging continuing education by sponsoring the attendance of doctors in international meetings and conferences to allow them to cope with the modern trends and developments in Gamma Knife procedure and treatment. Indeed, continuing studies and research are the twin factors that will bring about greater proficiency in our medical profession.

Mabuhay and Congratulations!

CHARLES C. CHANTE, M.D.
Chief Executive Officer and Medical Director

*Philippine Gamma Knife Center:
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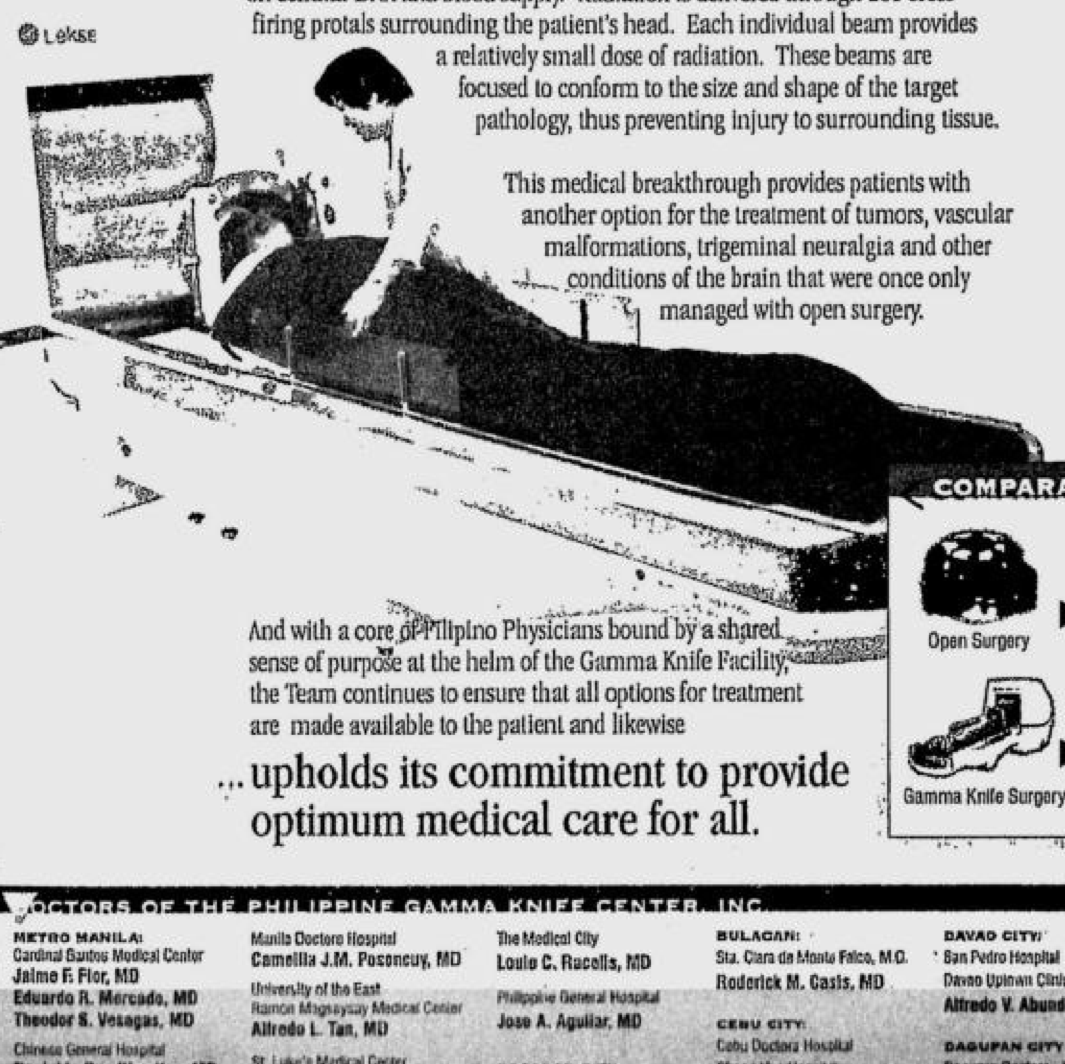
The Gamma Knife has been in use for more than 30 years in 26 countries having treated more than 180,000 cases worldwide. In the Philippines, the only Leksell Gamma Knife facility can be found within the Cardinal Santos Medical Center compound. Since its inception in 1997, the Center has successfully treated hundreds of cases and to this day continues to provide alternative to brain sugery.

The Leksell Gamma Knife is a radiosurgical tool that delivers ionizing radiation to the brain to treat various diseases. Developed primarily for use in treating tumors and vascular disorders of the brain, the Gamma Knife has been successfully applied in the treatment of a variety of well-defined intra-cranial anomalies. Referred to as 'radiosurgery without incision' it uses a focused dose of radiation to stop or reduce the growth of pathological tissue by its effect on cellular DNA and blood supply. Radiation is delivered through 201 cross-firing protals surrounding the patient's head. Each individual beam provides a relatively small dose of radiation. These beams are focused to conform to the size and shape of the target pathology, thus preventing injury to surrounding tissue.

This medical breakthrough provides patients with another option for the treatment of tumors, vascular malformations, trigeminal neuralgia and other conditions of the brain that were once only managed with open surgery.



And with a core of Filipino Physicians bound by a shared sense of purpose at the helm of the Gamma Knife Facility, the Team continues to ensure that all options for treatment are made available to the patient and likewise

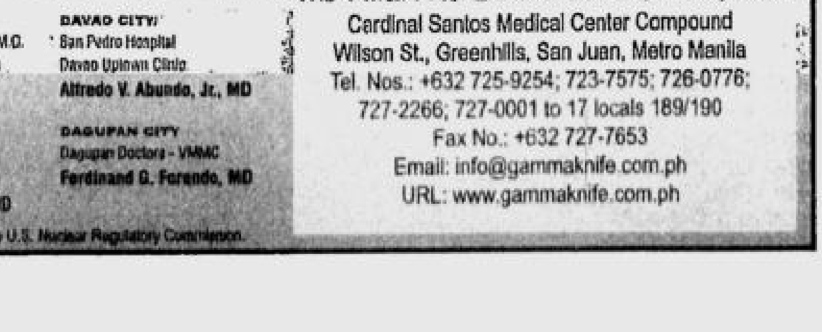
...upholds its commitment to provide optimum medical care for all.

Philippine Gamma Knife Center, Inc.
Total Patients Treated

As of December 31, 2002

VASCULAR MALFORMATIONS			140
AVM		115	
Cavernoma		24	
Other		1	
BENIGN TUMORS*			391
Meningioma		168	
Pituitary		113	
Acoustic		57	
Schwannoma	54		
Neurofibromatosis	3		
Trigeminal Schwannoma		3	
Geniculate Schwannoma		3	
Craniopharyngioma		17	
Pineal Tumor		16	
Tuberous Sclerosis		1	
Ependymoma		7	
Hemangioblastoma		1	
Germinoma		4	
Adenoid Cystic		1	
MALIGNANT TUMORS*			195
Metastasis		90	
Low Grade Glioma		36	
Mixed Oligo-astrocytoma	2		
Astrocytoma G-II	23		
Brainstem Glioma	7		
Chiasmatic Glioma	1		
Ganglioglioma	3		
High Grade Glioma		15	
Glioblastoma Multiforme	12		
Anaplastic Astrocytoma	3		
Nasopharyngeal Tumor		16	
Chordoma		4	
Glomus Tumor		3	
Chondrosarcoma		1	
Hemangiopericytoma		1	
Oligodendroglioma		2	
Medulloblastoma		1	
Lymphoma		22	
Thalamic-basal Ganglia Glioma		2	
Neuroblastoma		1	
Intraventricular Neurocytoma		1	
*** TOTAL TUMORS**			586
FUNCTIONAL DISORDERS			25
Trigeminal Neuralgia		22	
Pituitary Ablation		1	
Seizure Management		2	
FRACTIONATED LGK			7
TOTAL GAMMA KNIFE PROCEDURES			758
STEREOTACTIC BIOPSY			104
TOTAL PROCEDURES			862

COMPARATIVE COST-BENEFIT ILLUSTRATION


Open Surgery
Intensive Care (2-4 days)
Hospitalization (10-16 days)
Convalescence (10-16 days)
Back to pre-operative lifestyle
Gamma Knife Surgery
Back to pre-operative lifestyle

Compared with conventional open surgery, Leksell Gamma Knife treatments allow patients to return to their pre-operative lifestyles quickly and cost-effectively.

DOCTORS OF THE PHILIPPINE GAMMA KNIFE CENTER, INC.

METRO MANILA:
Cardinal Santos Medical Center
Jaime F. Flor, MD
Eduardo R. Mercado, MD
Theodor S. Vesagas, MD
Chinese General Hospital
Daniel L. Ong Kian Koc, MD
AFP Medical Center
Teodoro Tigno, Jr., MD

Manila Doctors Hospital
Camellia J.M. Posoncuy, MD
University of the East Ramon Magsaysay Medical Center
Alfredo L. Tan, MD
St. Luke's Medical Center
Capitol Medical Center
Manuel M. Mariano, MD
Antonio A. Rafael, MD

The Medical City
Louie C. Racelis, MD
Philippine General Hospital
Jose A. Aguilar, MD
BACOLOD CITY:
Riverside Medical Center
Carmelo C. Canto, MD

BULACAN:
Sta. Clara de Monte Falco, M.C.
Roderick M. Casis, MD
CEBU CITY:
Cebu Doctors Hospital
Chong Hua Hospital
Wyben R. Briones, MD
Amado V. Layno, Jr., MD

DAVAO CITY:
San Pedro Hospital
Davao Uptown Clinic
Alfredo V. Abundo, Jr., MD
DAGUPAN CITY
Dagupan Doctors - VMMC
Ferdinand G. Forendo, MD

The Leksell Gamma Unit is DOH-FDA-approved and adheres to the safety standards of the Philippine Nuclear Research Institute and the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

For more information, please call or visit us at:
THE PHILIPPINE GAMMA KNIFE CENTER, INC.
Cardinal Santos Medical Center Compound
Wilson St., Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila
Tel. Nos.: +632 725-9254; 723-7575; 726-0776; 727-2266; 727-0001 to 17 locals 189/190
Fax No.: +632 727-7653
Email: info@gammaknife.com.ph
URL: www.gammaknife.com.ph

ROUNDUP

Flashfloods

MATI, Davao Oriental—Flash floods hit low-lying areas in Cateel, Boston, Baganga and Caraga towns in the province since Feb. 5. The provincial disaster coordinating council said many Mandaya lumad residents of these towns evacuated to safer grounds. Local disaster officials said the series of flash floods damaged not only houses but also the farms of the residents. Edgardo Ricky Arisola, leader of Cateel Bantay Kalikasan, earlier warned residents of these towns of disaster if they continued to allow the massive illegal cutting of trees. *Ferdinand Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Suspension

DUMAGUETE CITY—Mayor Rodolfo Gonzales Jr. of Valencia town on Tuesday accused the Negros Oriental provincial board of "encroaching (on) the powers of the executive department" when the board reversed his order preventively suspending a barangay captain of his town. "The Provincial Board does not have the power to impose preventive suspension orders, so it does not have the power to lift it," the mayor said. Gonzales placed Palinpinon barangay captain Jesus Salvoro under preventive suspension from Dec. 10 to Feb. 8 pending investigation of a complaint of oppression, misconduct, gross negligence and dereliction of duty filed by the barangay council against him. Salvoro appealed the order to the provincial board. On Jan. 24 the provincial board's committee on rules reversed Gonzales' order on the ground that Salvoro was denied due process. The committee said the suspension order was issued even if the mayor has yet to resolve Salvoro's motion to dismiss the complaint.

Alex Pal, PDI Visayas Bureau

40 years for rape

BACOLOD CITY—Four gang members were each meted with a 40-year jail term for raping a young housemaid in Hinigaran town, Negros Occidental, in 1995. Judge Jose Aguirre Jr. of the Regional Trial Court based in Himamaylan town also ordered Ruel Coronel, Nieven Capistrano, Gene Jarapa and Ramil Mabuti, all members of the Balcon Boys Gang, to each pay the victim P300,000 in moral damages. Their co-accused Eva Khey, who abducted the victim, was sentenced to at least three years and eight months imprisonment for grave coercion. Zosimo Lanzar, driver of the tricycle used in the abduction, was meted with six months imprisonment.

Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

Fire

TACLOBAN CITY—About 500 families were displaced on Feb. 4 when a fire of still unknown origin hit an urban poor area in Catbalogan, Samar. Insp. Daniel Salvatierra, Catbalogan fire chief, said the blaze destroyed about P20 million worth of property as it gutted down at last 300 houses in Purok Four, Barangay Canlapwas, Catbalogan. Salvatierra said the fire started from the two-story house owned by Demetrio Babael at about 7:50 p.m.

Joey Gabieta, PDI Visayas Bureau

They're RGA rebels

THE HEAD of the story "RHB rebels turn Mt. Arayat into 'killing' fields,' cops say" in yesterday's issue (page A15) should have read "Ex-NPA rebels . . ." Our apologies.

No Chinese marker

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—Military authorities here denied that Chinese forces had already constructed a marker in Quirino (also called Jackson) atoll, in the contested Kalayaan Island Group. Maj. Nicomedes Levida, information officer of the Western Command, said the Philippine Navy sent troops early this week to check on the alleged new encroachment but there was nothing on it. Quirino atoll is found among the eight islands/islets occupied by the Philippines dispersed in the waters of South China Sea. *Jofelle Tesorio, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Farmer executed

SAN NARCISO, Quezon—At least seven suspected New People's Army rebels shot dead a farmer in Barangay San Juan in this town Tuesday allegedly as payment for the farmer's "blood debts" against the people and the revolutionary movement. Police said the suspects, who introduced themselves as communist guerrillas, barged into the house of Reymundo Tejano, 38, and was dragged a few meters away. What followed, according to Tejano's family, were sounds of gunfire from the direction of the victim's location. The victim was later found dead from multiple bullet wounds in different parts of the body. A letter from the NPA, which supposedly contains the detailed list of the victim's "blood debts," was found beside his body. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

SHOW OF FORCE

50 NPAs swoop down on town in Masbate

LEGAZPI CITY—About 50 unidentified armed men believed to be members of the New People's Army (NPA) abducted a barangay chairman and two barangay council members in Cueva, San Pascual, Masbate on Saturday.

Masbate police chief Senior Supt. Romeo Mapalo identified the abducted officials as Cueva Barangay Chair Leoni Masarque, and councilors Bert Cañete and Samson Barrameda.

Reports reaching Camp General Simeon Ola here revealed that Masarque was first taken away by the suspects who were clad in fatigue uniforms without name plates, before they went to Barangay Mapanique, about 400 meters away from San Pascual town proper, and abducted Cañete and Barrameda. They also took with them Masarque's base radio transceiver.

The group later withdrew toward different directions.

Bicol police director Chief Supt. Rodolfo Tor immediately alerted the Albay and Camarines Sur police, being the nearest police stations to the island of Burias in Masbate.

The Army's 901st Brigade and the police's Regional Mobile Group had sent troops to Masbate for a manhunt operation.

Mapalo said they have yet to determine who led such a big group of abductors carrying high-powered firearms.

Among the angles that they were looking into is that the abductors could be NPA members.

Mapalo said the suspects were able to assemble in one group with such swiftness that it was undetected.

This was the first reported abduction involving rebels and barangay officials in San Pascual since Mapalo assumed his post as Masbate police chief in August last year, he said.

In Sorsogon, Army soldiers captured a suspected rebel identified as Maria Angela Fulgar on Sunday after a 10-minute encounter with 15 NPA rebels in Barangay San Antonio in Barcelona town. Fulgar was reported to be under tactical interrogation.

Recovered from the encounter scene were a .38-caliber revolver, an airgun and four backpacks containing personal belongings and anti-government documents.

No casualty was reported on the government side.

Communist guerrillas have stepped up their offensives against government targets following the decision of the United States and Europe, with the support of the Philippine government, to tag them as international terrorists. *Ronnie Lorejo with a report from Joyce Mejillano, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Cops charge Cebu jeep drivers with 'sedition'

CEBU CITY—A transport leader has been charged with inciting to sedition for declaring a "state of rebellion" against the city government when it published a list of jeepney drivers who had the most traffic violations.

Two ranking police officials acted as complainants of the criminal case filed yesterday against Cerecio Mapula, also former Cebu port commissioner, at the city prosecutor's office.

They were Supt. Josephus Angan, acting chief of the Cebu City Police Office, and Senior Insp. Rodolfo Albotra Jr., acting chief of the Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Branch (CIIB).

They accused Mapula of violating Article 142 of the Revised Penal Code for publicly declaring a "state of rebellion" against the Cebu City government.

The Inquirer tried to get Mapula's reaction but nobody answered his mobile phone.

Mapula is spokesperson of the Transport Unity Forum (TUF), a coalition of at least 11 driver organizations in Cebu. He is also consultant of Alyansa ng mga Nagkahiusang Drayber-Operator Alang sa Reporma (Andar), a member-organization of the TUF.

The complaint stemmed from Mapula's statement in response to the move of Cebu City Mayor Tomas Osmena to publish the names of "erring" drivers in the local papers last Jan. 4.

These drivers had the most unpaid traffic fines at the Cebu City Traffic Operations Management (CITOM).

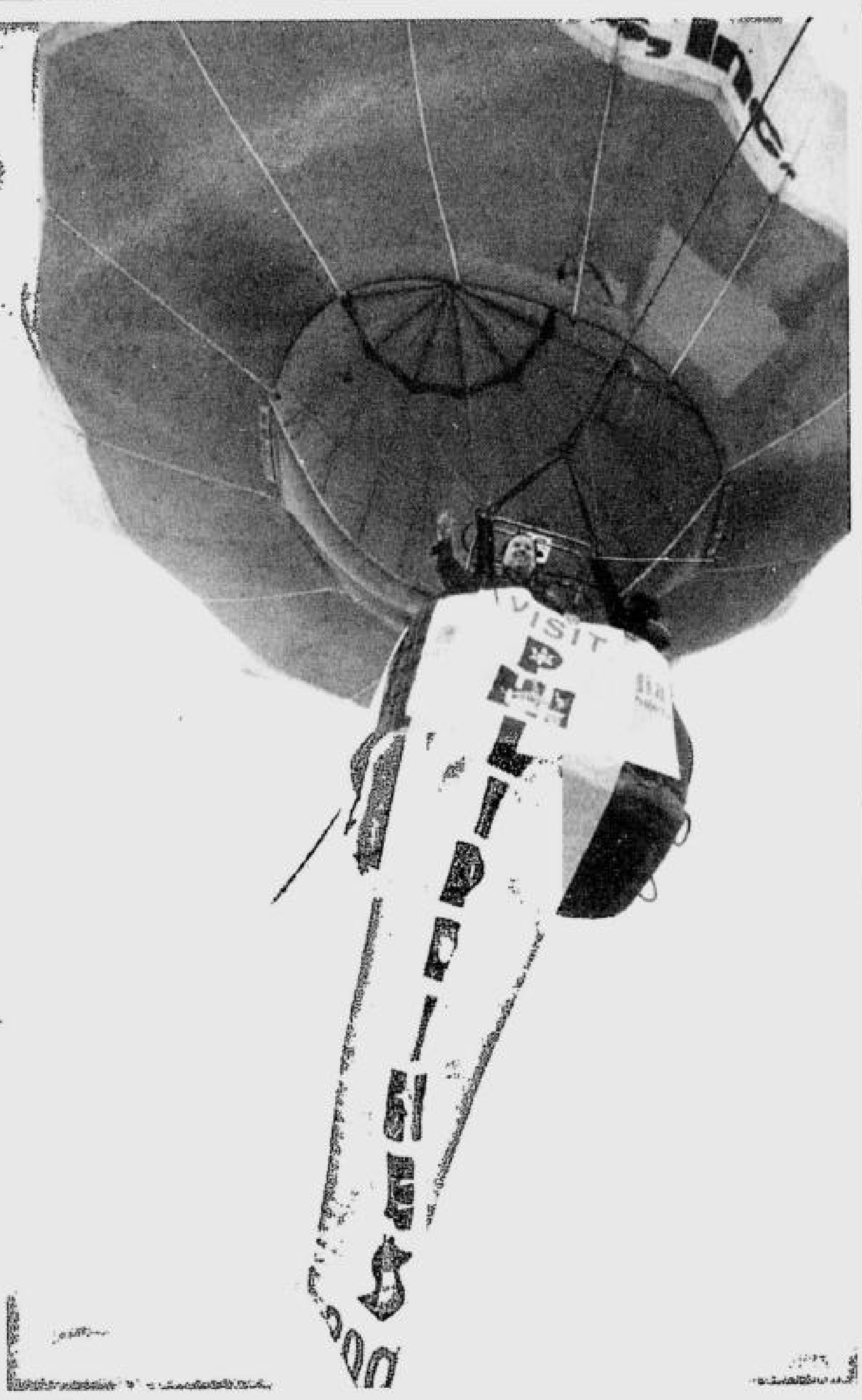
In the joint affidavit attached to the complaint, Angan and Albotra said Mapula was quoted as saying in the Cebu Daily News (CDN) that he had declared a state of rebellion against the city government following the publication of the names of erring drivers.

The CDN is an English news daily of the Inquirer Publications Inc.

"Such utterances and declaration are seditious as they tend to cause public uprising and the danger is both clear and imminent as enshrined in the 'Clear and Present Rule' and 'Dangerous Tendency Rule,'" the two police officials said.

Angan and Albotra pointed out that Mapula's statement also tended to hamper Osmena from performing his functions and to "instigate" others to disturb peace in the community.

The TUF earlier threatened to stage a strike in response to Osmena's continued refusal to suspend the collection of prescribed penalties on traffic violations that reached P122 million. *Jolene Bulambot, PDI Visayas Bureau*



JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

WOW
The government's renewed campaign to promote tourism in the Philippines takes off at the Clark Air Field in Pampanga at the start of a hot air balloon festival there on Feb. 7.

'Cross-dressers' banned in Mati parish church

MATI, Davao Oriental—A Catholic priest of this town is now strictly imposing a dress code among his parishioners, barring cross-dressing and "skimpily-clad" churchgoers from taking the Holy Communion.

"A woman who wears the clothes of a man or a man who wears the clothes of a woman is hated by God. That's my basis of imposing a dress code inside the church. That was written in the Holy Bible in Deutoronomy Chapter 20 verse 5.

So they (churchgoers) have no reason to complain or protest about this policy because it has biblical basis," said Fr. Samuel Bronola, assistant parish priest of the Mati Cathedral, said.

"Those who violate this dress code will not receive the Holy Communion," Bronola added.

He said many churchgoers "wear sexy, skimpy clothes" inside the Church, forgetting that they are inside the house of God and not in the beer house.

"It's a pure disrespect to God. That is why man churchgoers were shocked when I announced during Mass that I am no longer allowing those who wear sexy, skimpy clothes inside the church to take the Holy Communion," he said.

"If you want to take the Holy Communion, you can get it from other priests who do not care about the dress code inside the house of God," he added.

But the priest admitted that many parishioners and "even my fellow priests" was against the ban "that is why they complained me to (Mati) Bishop Patricio Alo."

"But I have the full backing of the Mati bishop because I have the biblical basis to justify my policy. It is them who are unreasonable because they have no basis to back their claims," he said.

Bronola also said many parishioners lauded his policy.

"Many have congratulated and thanked me for that policy. Many parishioners said that what I was doing was for decency," he said.

He said that in a Mass he celebrated in Governor Generoso town, former Gov. Rosalind Lopez had to change from jeans to skirt before entering the church.

The priest, however, criticized his fellow priests for not implementing the dress code.

"Perhaps, they don't have the guts to implement it. We should educate the faithful on this and the bishop agrees with me that we, priests, should start to educate our faithful that there is a dress code inside the Church," he said.

He admitted that a lot of male cross-dressers "look more female" than the real ones.

"But when I doubt, I would really ask directly about his or her gender. If he would say he is a gay, and he wears the clothes of a woman, he will not receive the Holy Communion," he said.

Grace Mamanuan, 26, had already suffered under the hands of Bronola. *Ferdinand Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Sulu 'gun culture' worries Army

ZAMBOANGA CITY—The culture of gun in Sulu could prove to be a major hindrance in the implementation of a gun ban, which President Macapagal-Arroyo had ordered.

Task Force Sulu chief Brig. General Romeo Tolentino said unlicensed firearms alone were estimated to number 33,000 in the island-province. He said the proliferation of loose firearms was difficult to stop.

Southern Command chief Lt. General Narciso Abaya said in jest there could be more firearms in Sulu than people.

Abaya said enforcing the ban in Sulu would be difficult. *Julie Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Head of indigenous folk body vow land titles

BAGUIO CITY—The new chair of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples vowed to secure the ancestral domain of the country's 13.5 million indigenous peoples through a faster formula.

"The problem now is how to secure at least five million hectares of indigenous peoples' ancestral domain," NCIP Chair Reuben Dasay Lingating told reporters here on Friday.

Lingating, a Subanen from Mindanao, who replaced Evelyn Dunuan as NCIP chair on Feb. 3, said the urgent task now is how to speed up the conversion of various Certificates of Ancestral Domain Claims (CADCs) into Certificates of Ancestral Domain Titles (CADTs).

A CADC merely certifies an indigenous community's claim to its ancestral domain, while a CADT signifies an indigenous community's ownership of its ancestral domain.

If given a CADT, an indigenous community can control, manage, protect and use its ancestral domain and its resources according to the community folk's customs and traditions and primarily for their own welfare and development.

Even before the enactment of the 1997 Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (Ipra), which created the NCIP, the DENR had issued 181 CADCs for 2.5 million hectares. *Maurice Malanes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Singer-turned-vice gov sues for sex harassment

NAGA CITY—The Ombudsman has suspended a provincial board member of Camarines Sur for three months without pay after Vice Gov. Imelda Papin filed a complaint of alleged sexual harassment against him.

Emilio Gozales III, officer-in-charge of the Office of the Deputy Ombudsman for Luzon, granted Papin's request to place board member Crisanto Rances under preventive suspension.

But Rances said he has yet to receive the order of suspension. He denied making a pass at Papin.

He said the charges were politically motivated. He added that Papin filed the charges to divert attention away from her dismal performance as presiding officer of the provincial board.

Rances said he believes that Papin used biased witnesses in filing the charges.

He said his lawyer will file a motion to stop the suspension. He expressed confidence the case would not progress.

The Ombudsman earlier ordered the suspension of Rances on Jan. 20, 2000 for committing indecent acts and lack of decorum. The charges were filed by a female employee.

The recent preventive suspension came after Papin accused Rances of embracing her, touching her breasts and trying to kiss her in the lips on Nov. 5.

She said the first incident happened at the conference room of the legislative building, followed by another incident at the lobby and finally inside her office when the board member tried to kiss her in the lips.

Papin said Rances was reeking with the smell of liquor when he made the pass while Rances was asking Papin to sign his application for a loan with the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS).

She said the accused board member, in the third incident, touched her breast and tried to kiss her in the lips when she rejected Rances' request for her to endorse the loan application.

Papin said Rances was not eligible for a GSIS loan because of a pending case of sexual harassment filed by a female employee at the Sandiganbayan.

Papin's counsel has also filed a criminal complaint against Rances at the provincial prosecutor's office of Camarines Sur. *Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Eyeball-to-eyeball in Pikit

From page A1

"We have surrounded the rebel forces and are poised to attack," Luna told reporters. "We are just waiting for the orders."

Attack force

Military sources said some 3,000 troops from three infantry divisions—plus a brigade of Marines, 20 tanks, six fighter jets and six helicopter gunships—were ready for the assault.

In his news conference, Reyes said that soldiers deployed for the attack belong to the 602nd Brigade. That brigade, Reyes said, is supported by Marines.

Luna said that with thousands of troops and at least 20 105-howitzers already in place, the military was ready to pound the rebel forces anytime starting today. The troops were only waiting for assault "orders from our higher ups."

Or, he said, war could begin if the MILF fired a single shot.

"We are waiting for that signal. If they shoot any of the civilians or the soldiers, we will start the war," Luna said.

Observers, particularly from local governments and non-government organizations, said the looming violence could be worse than that in 2000, when President Joseph Estrada ordered an all-out war against the MILF.

"(The soldiers) are in hot pursuit of certain lawless elements, principally the kidnap-for-ransom group and the people responsible for the bombing last Dec. 24 in Sharif Aguak..." Reyes said. Some have standing warrants of arrest, he added.

One particular target is Tahir Alonto, alleged leader of the Pentagon Gang which the military said maintained links with the MILF.

Reyes said that the gang and the MILF had been treating the area as a "safe haven".

The coming assault was cleared with North Cotabato Gov. Manny Piñol, he added.

"The situation is very, very manageable and we are doing this because we cannot allow lawless elements to claim that they have camps," Reyes said.

"There are no (rebel) camps that are authorized anywhere in the Philippines," he added.

Asked how the coming clash would affect the negotiations with the MILF, Reyes said the negotiations would continue.

The heightened tension is threatening an already shaky ceasefire and the on-again, off-again efforts to resume peace talks.

Gazzali Jaafar, a spokesperson for the MILF, accused the AFP of violating a ceasefire agreement.

"We find it difficult but we are determined to push through with peace negotiations," he said in a radio interview.

Another MILF spokesperson, Eid Kabalu, denied the rebels were harboring criminals and alleged the military buildup was part of a government strategy to pressure the MILF into accepting a political package being prepared in time for upcoming talks in Malaysia.

Kabalu said the military might have mistaken the gathering of many Muslims in the area and the stockpiling of rice and animals as preparations for war. He claimed the Muslims actually were preparing to celebrate the start of Eid al-Adha, or the feast of sacrifice, which marks the end of the annual pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca.

He said the guerrillas would not initiate any fighting.

"The instruction to our forces on the ground is to defend themselves. We would not die helplessly," Kabalu said.

The MILF forged a shaky truce with the government in 1997. In August 2001, both sides renewed the cease-fire, but clashes continue to flare up sporadically.

"This forms part of a pressure group because the government is forcing us to accept the political package proposal prepared by Malacanang," Kabalu told the INQUIRER.

But Presidential Assistant for Mindanao and chief government negotiator Jesus Dureza denied Kabalu's claim.

"There was no such plan. We are not forcing the MILF to accept the peace offer. What the military is doing on the ground is purely military action aimed at neutralizing lawless groups such as Pentagon kidnap members who are reportedly seeking refuge in MILF identified areas," Dureza said in a radio interview.

The AFP blames the MILF for the attack early yesterday on an Army engineering truck at Matanog town in Maguindanao province, about 70 km this town. One soldier was killed and seven others were wounded, Col. Eduardo Lena said.

Evacuation centers

Fr. Bert Layson, OMI, director of inter-faith dialogue of the Archdiocese of Cotabato, said as many as 20,000 villagers had sought shelter in a school, a government rice warehouse and a gymnasium in this town.

He said more civilians were arriving in evacuation centers.

The social welfare department in Central Mindanao has provided initial assistance, including food and sleeping mats.

"My heart starts to bleed seeing these people in an indescribable situation. I cannot understand why these things happen when a ceasefire agreement is in place," Layson said.

He said the people had suffered enough and both the government and the MILF should give them time to live normally.

"Abide by the ceasefire agreement, avoid confrontation and consider the plight of thousands of displaced families," he appealed to both government and the MILF.

The priest, who was also involved in the rehabilitation of refugees after the 2000 all-out war, said the current situation could become more serious than previous clashes.

"This is the biggest military build-up I've seen in Pikit," he said.

The evacuees said they left their homes because of the government troops' build up.

But Luna said residents should instead blame the MILF and its "cohorts" who were engaged in criminal activities.

He said the military was only trying to help the police in arresting the criminals so they could be brought before the bar of justice.

Instead of surrendering the suspects, Luna said, the MILF massed its forces in Barangays Inog-og, Talitay, Rajamuda, Bagoinged, Boliok, Bulod, Bolol, Barongis and Kabasalan, which are all within the Liguasan Marsh Complex.

"These forces of darkness have been building up in the area for the past few days and we have to sanitize these areas," Luna said.

"(But) we are prepared for any eventuality. Anytime now we are expecting a massive assault," Jaafar said.

But he said whatever happened, the peace talks would continue.

"We are not backing out," Jaafar said. *Jeffrey Tupas, Edwin Fernandez, Rosa May de Guzman with Edwin O. Fernandez and Allan A. Nawal, PDI Mindanao Bureau; Reuters, AP*

'Mama, please pray for us. We're off to war'

From page A1

positions they hold or because of their big number, according to Gen. Dionisio Santiago, chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Lt. Gen. Edward Soriano, a native of Alcala, Pampanga, received his third star and took over the command of Fort Lewis, making him the highest-ranking Filipino-American in the US Army. Brig. Gen. Antonio B. Taguba, who was born in Sampaloc, Manila, is the commanding general of the US Army's Community and Family Support Center based in Virginia.

Although US President George W. Bush has yet to press the war button on Iraq, mothers like Miclat are already fraught with anxiety.

The two children of Miclat, 79, of Minalin, Pampanga, are serving in a US Navy unit that began to move last week to the theater of conflict. Now master sergeants, they have been in the service for 17 years.

"Because they chose to join the US Navy, I knew that someday they would be in hostile situations. But while I have prepared myself to accept that, that's always the case for those in the military, my mind could never be at peace because I always fear for their safety," she said.

The eldest son of Lina Suarez, 60, a public school teacher in Tacloban City, is also a US Navy man, assigned at the MSS Missouri.

"I will just pray hard for the safety of my son" Suarez said, referring to Jose Maria, 34, who is preparing for a possible encounter with Iraqi forces for the second time. Jose Mari was deployed in the Middle East during the 1991 Gulf War, she said.

"He told me during our conversations that they have been training for months now in preparation for the war," Suarez, a teacher at the Rizal Elementary School in Tacloban, said in a telephone interview two weeks ago. "I even told him that I might die ahead of him."

Cries and prayers

Since Feb. 1, when her two children called from Egypt, Miclat said she had spent much of her time crying, praying and monitoring the statements of Bush on Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and on the United Nations inspection of Iraq's alleged weapons of mass destruction.

"I've often been crying. They're going to be in a difficult situation," she said, after recalling what Jose and Johanna—the youngest in her brood of three boys and five girls—asked her to do.

"I hate Saddam Hussein," Suarez said emphatically, but she is still hoping that war will take place, but for the safety of her son.

Jose Mari has been with the US Navy since 1988 or a year after he graduated from college with a degree in banking and finance at the now defunct Divine Word University (DWU), Suarez said.

His father Angel said Jose Mari applied with the US Navy after reading a recruitment notice advertised by the US military, then holding base in Subic, in the newspapers.

Jose Mari is married to Danette Lopez, a Filipino nurse from Bacolod City whom he met in the United States. They have a 3-year-old son, Matthew. The family lives in California.

"As a mother, I am really worried. But what can I do? It's a call of duty," Suarez said.

During the 1991 Gulf War, Jose Mari suffered hearing impairment, she said. She did not know how her son had his hearing problem. She advised him to take a leave of absence, but "he did not obey me," she said.

The last time that they saw each other was in 1999 when her son came home for a vacation.

Suarez said all they could do now was pray because she knew that they could not stop her son from doing his duty.

"He is brave. It's part of his job," she said.

Ugly side of war

Wars, according to Miclat, claim lives. She said she had seen the ugly side of wars. Minalin, her town, had been the site of the bloodiest skirmishes documented during World War II between Japanese troops and Hukbalahap fighters and later, returning American soldiers.

Miclat said she had consoled herself in the thought that Johanna, 41, would not be deployed to the combat zone. She said she believed Johanna, who was sent to school by the US Navy for a course in pharmacy, would perform medical duties away from the battlefield.

It is Jose, 47, whom she worries more about. She said her son, whom she fondly calls Bong, could be on board one of the aircraft carriers that have sailed out.

Jose and Johanna followed the career path of their eldest brother Rey.

Rey applied for the US Navy through the former Clark Air Base, some 20 km north of Minalin. Before capping a 20-year service in 1991, Rey petitioned for his parents and seven siblings to settle in the United States.

Rey's enlistment in the American military, said Miclat, changed the fate of the family.

"We were so poor. Their father was just a drummer (in the local but famous Arco Iris musical band). We lived in a small hut. And they were all eight. I did not take work. I all raised them. Diosdado played overseas but his earnings were not enough. We struggled to send them to school no matter how poor we were," she recalled.

Miclat last saw her eight children in May last year when they gathered in the United States for the burial of her husband Diosdado there.

After living in Hawaii, California and Texas where her children have settled into their respective families during the last 25 years, Miclat, a naturalized US citizen, decided to come home to Minalin last August.

She's going through the ordeal of worrying about Jose and Johanna by herself, without Diosdado this time.

"I hope I see them alive again," she said, her voice quivering.

'Excluded families' hit Church

From page A1

arated partners, homosexual couples and those living together outside marriage attended the meeting at the UP lagoon in Diliman, Quezon City. The meeting was initiated by Likhaan and the UP College of Social Work and Community Development.

Siguion-Reyna said that she was proud and happy to be part of all those whom the Catholic Church barred from joining the Fourth World Meeting of Families last month because they did not fit its standards.

"I know what it was like to be different. Born a bastard, I knew early on what it was like not to belong," she told a gathering of some 150 people.

But she said her family's being a bastard did not prevent her and her mother from treating well their father's other children such as Enrile, "who just showed up on our doorstep after Liberation."

"To love and care for other children is not easy, but my mother did it because she was a Christian," Siguion-Reyna said in her speech.

"She was a Christian who defined Christianity according to her own relationship with Christ and not according to the narrow-minded rules and prejudices of a Church," she said of her mother.

Her mother, Purita Liwanag, and Alfonso Ponce-Enrile had children while the latter was still married to his first wife.

The older Enrile got a divorce during the Japanese Occupation and married Liwanag, making Siguion-Reyna and her four siblings his legitimate kids.

If conscience was the yardstick, "there is greater cause to wonder about the morality and consequent steps undertaken by the Catholic Church," Siguion-Reyna said.

"The Church says the family is under attack, and yet who has been so recently and so gravely exposed as perniciously attacking the family with past and continuing sexual abuses of minors and innocents?" she asked.

"The Church says the family is under attack, but who has cruelly attacked the family through the rejection of all who are gathered here?" Siguion-Reyna told a cheering crowd.

The meeting of excluded families featured games, booths, family portraits and drawings by children of what the Catholic Church considered dysfunctional families.

'Crisis manager'...

From page A1

In Malacañang, presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye issued a clarification. "There is no intention on the part of the government to permanently close down its embassy in Iraq and the President has not given any such order," Bunye said.

Golez had said the country was closing the embassy in Baghdad "for practical reasons at the proper time because it (could) be a target." He had also told reporters that the decisions were authorized by no less than President Macapagal-Arroyo.

But Bunye said yesterday: "The truth is there is no such order from the President."

When asked whether Golez got a dressing down from the President, Bunye replied: "No comment."

But a Palace source said the President was displeased with Golez's announcement.

Early yesterday morning, Baghdad Embassy charge d'affaires Grace Escalante denied receiving any order from Malacañang to close shop and transfer to Jordan.

Esclante and three others remain in the embassy after "non-essential" staff and all dependents were evacuated to Amman.

Bunye said Escalante and her staff "will remain in their post until further notice."

But Golez, at the Senate to brief senators on another matter, denied making a categorical announcement.

"I wish to clarify my statements as reported. What I said was the President authorized last week the evacuation of non-essential personnel in the embassy in Baghdad. Among the non-essentials, eight have been evacuated," Golez told Senate reporters.

He recalled that a reporter asked him when the remaining four embassy personnel would be removed, to which he said he had replied that it was up to them to decide if they want to evacuate before Feb. 11.

"This is part of the contingency measure for a possible attack in Baghdad. So what is at risk is Baghdad, and not the embassy alone," he said yesterday.

Sen. Manny Villar, chair of the Senate foreign relations committee, said it was good that Golez clarified his statement because the Philippines should never go to war against Iraq.

"Why do we want to fight Iraq when Iraq is not fighting with us?" Villar said. "Many countries are provoking us to go to war and yet we don't respond. Now we want to wage war against a country that has never waged any war against us."

Villar said it was possible that there was indeed such a plan by Malacañang to close the embassy but it was changed at the last minute.

"There must be confusion among the people in Malacañang right now because this issue of Iraq is serious."

But a Palace source said the President had directed Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo to call up Golez and tell him to avoid making such mistakes.

Asked to explain where Golez got the Feb. 11 date for the embassy's closure, Bunye said: "I think the only explanation for that is that Feb. 11 coincides with the start of the Haj and the Haj is an official Muslim holiday."

"Offices will be closed (during the Haj) but the embassy will remain open," Bunye said.

But Ople said that Golez's miscue in announcing the closure could have been avoided had the President's adviser double-checked with the relevant official sources before making the announcement before the media.

With the threat of a new war between Iraq and a US-led coalition looming ever larger, Golez was named the government's overall "crisis manager," while Ambassador Roy Cimatu, special envoy to the region and head of the Middle East Preparedness Team, was designated "ground commander."

Ople said that, with the exception of Iraq, the country's diplomatic posts in the Middle East continue to report no reason for evacuation and relocation of Filipino workers.

For the 118 Filipinos in Baghdad, however, Ople had previously announced that the President had already lifted the suspension of any plan to relocate or evacuate.

Escalante said: "Again, we would like to tell all the families back home of the overseas Filipino workers here in Iraq that there is no need to panic."

"In the event that we have an emergency, we have contingency plans in place to have their loved ones relocate to a safer place in Amman, Jordan," she added.

Escalante said that she would temporarily turn over the administration of embassy functions to the staff at the embassy on Feb. 15 to meet with other Filipino ambassadors and charges d'affaires in Jordan. *With reports from AFP; Mathew Murphy*

Senate defies Paris body, rejects changes to money laundering law

From page A1

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) to look into suspicious accounts without a court order.

SB 2419 sought to introduce amendments to the AMLA that were being pushed by the FATF, which represents the developed countries, before a Feb. 12 deadline.

Without the amendments, the Philippines faces sanctions like the close scrutiny of inbound financial transactions and the outright refusal by foreign banks to remit funds to banks operating in the country.

Those who voted in the Senate against the provision seeking to dispense with a court order to look into bank accounts were Senators Aquilino Pimentel, Edgardo Angara, Teresa Aquino-Oreta, Rodolfo Biazon, Luisa Ejercito, Manuel Villar, Vicente Sotto III, Panfilo Lacson, Gregorio Honasan, John Osmeña, Loren Legarda and Joker Arroyo.

Those in favor were Senators Drilon, Magasaysay, Pangilinan, Juan Flavier, Robert Barbers, Serge Osmeña, Noli de Castro and Ramon Revilla. Sen. Robert Jaworski abstained.

Another FATF demand, which sought to include banking transactions that took place before the effectivity of the AMLA, was rejected by the senators by a vote of 15-6.

Earlier, the Senate lowered the threshold on suspect transactions from P4 million to P2 million, still much higher than the P500,000 proposed in SB 2419.

The FATF had demanded the abolition of the threshold prescribed in the AMLA. The law requires banks and other financial institutions to report accounts exceeding the prescribed threshold to the AMLC for investigation.

In a vote late last night, the House approved the amendments sought by the FATF by a vote of 149 to 12 with no abstentions.

Majority Leader Neptali Gonzalez said the House version was closer to the FATF requirements than the Senate version.

Approved were the provisions allowing the AMLC to look into suspect accounts without a court order provided the Supreme Court or Court of Appeals did not take action on the petition of a depositor within 15 days, lowering the threshold to P500,000, inclusion of suspicious transactions in the reportorial requirement of banks, and the inclusion of penalties for those reporting transactions who release unauthorized information.

The Philippines was included in the FATF's list of countries deemed uncooperative in the international drive against money laundering. The body required the government to amend the AMLA before the country could be stricken off the list.

Senator Pimentel, who had labeled the FATF requirements as US-dictated, said that even if the approved version did not please the FATF and the United States, the US had other means of obtaining information on money laundering in the Philippines through the RP-US Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty.

Earlier, Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. told reporters after a caucus that Congress must pass the measure. Otherwise, he said, the country will be in difficulty as some five million overseas Filipino workers would encounter hardship in remitting their money.

Ibon poll

From page A1

pagal would just end up a dismal eighth in a field of 10 possible candidates, according to results of the survey that Ibon conducted nationwide on Jan. 6-24. Worse, even if Ms Macapagal decides to slide down as a mere vice presidential candidate, she'll also lose and end up last in a field of 10 possible candidates.

Ibon found that former education secretary Raul Roco was the man to beat if the presidential election were held today. Roco, who consistently topped previous surveys, widened his lead over his possible rivals.

Using a stratified random sampling, the Ibon survey covered 1,381 respondents nationwide and had a margin of error of plus or minus three percent.

Only respondents from Metro Manila-totaling 436-were asked whether they believed in Ms Macapagal's declaration not to run next year.

Ibon research director Antonio Tujan Jr. said Ibon had already distributed questionnaires for its 2002 fourth quarter national survey when Ms Macapagal made the announcement during her Rizal Day speech in Baguio.

"We managed to reach only the NCR (National Capital Region)" Tujan said in a phone interview.

The survey found that 46.10 percent of the respondents in Metro Manila did not believe Ms Macapagal's declaration.

A total of 27.98 percent said they "don't know" and 25.92 percent answered "yes."

For its nationwide survey, Ibon asked respondents who they would choose as president if elections were held today.

Roco, who was chosen by 33.29 percent of the respondents who mentioned names and 20.2 percent of the total respondents; actor Fernando Poe Jr., 17.78 percent and 10.79 percent; Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr., 10.98 percent and 6.66 percent; Sen. Noli de Castro, 9.07 percent and 5.5 percent; Sen. Loren Legarda, 5.73 percent and 3.48 percent.

Former President Fidel Ramos, 5.13 percent and 3.11 percent; Sen. Panfilo Lacson, 4.77 percent and 2.9 percent; Ms Macapagal, 3.70 percent and 2.24 percent; Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., 3.34 percent and 2.03 percent; former President Joseph Estrada, 1.43 percent and 0.87 percent; and Sen. Edgardo Angara, 0.84 percent and 0.51 percent.

More than a third of the respondents (39.32 percent) were undecided.

Ibon then listed 10 "possible candidates" for president and asked the voters who they would choose.

Again was Roco No. 1 with 29.91 percent. He was followed by Poe, 17.09 percent; De Castro, 15.21 percent;

Legarda, 6.66 percent; Lacson, 5.79 percent; Ms Macapagal, 3.84 percent; Guingona, 3.11 percent; Ramos, 1.23 percent; Pimentel, 1.09 percent; and, Angara, 0.87 percent.

A total of 15.21 percent of the respondents were undecided.

For "listed possible candidates" for vice president, Legarda came in first with 23.46 percent; De Castro, 14.70 percent; Guingona, 8.91 percent; Roco, 8.18 per cent; Poe, 6.44 percent.

Lacson, 5.29 percent; Angara, 3.26 percent; Pimentel, 3.26 percent; Ramos, 2.68 percent; and Ms Macapagal, 2.03 percent.

A total of 18.68 percent of the respondents were undecided.

The respondents were also asked to assess the performance of the Macapagal administration.

A sizable 40.55 percent rated it as "good" while 7.46 said it was "very good."

A total of 38.60 percent of the respondents rated the administration's performance as "poor" while 13.40 percent said they "don't know."

Palace wars ...

From page A1

Roberto "Bobby" Capco with his own man, Palace sources.

The right to use the Marcos bedroom and the fate of Capco were the two issues that sparked a shouting match between the two top officials in front of President Macapagal- Arroyo and members of the newly created communications group last week.

Sources said that, per the "verbal instructions" of Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo, the entire Marcos bedroom would now be Tiglao's exclusive turf.

Braganza is reportedly looking for space in Kalayaan Hall inside, while Arlegui House—outside Palace grounds—is being renovated to host his main office.

The sources also said that the search was on for a new post for Capco, who had been Ms Macapagal's media officer ever since she was Vice President.

"Braganza wants to have his own guy and Capco is not his man," one of the sources said.

One option is for Capco, who is currently press undersecretary for operations, to be named as Tiglao's deputy. Another is for Capco to be designated as deputy to Presidential Spokesperson Ignacio Bunye.

"Capco is good in communicating in Filipino, hence he will be useful for radio," a source said. "He will complement Bunye who communicates well in English."

Still another option is for Capco to hold concurrent positions as deputy chief of staff and deputy spokesperson.

But another source said that Capco may no longer prefer to remain inside Malacañang. In that case, he will be given another post outside the Palace.

Malacañang yesterday released the appointment papers of two new press undersecretaries for Braganza: Milton Alingod and Rocky Nazareno. Alingod is former vice president of GMA-7, while Nazareno is a former senior reporter of the INQUIRER.

"Walang urungan, Senator Ping

Ituloy mo ang laban na babaan sa ₱500,000 ang ceiling sa pag-imbestiga ng mga deposits na suspected "dirty money". At hindi ang ₱2M na itinutulak ng ilan sa iyong kapwa mambabatas.

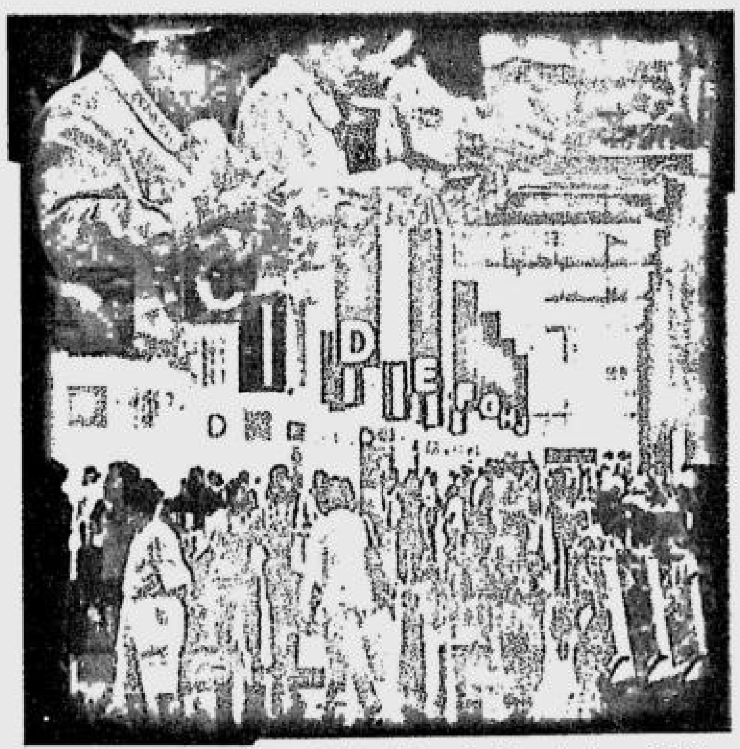
Pakiusap lang Sen. Lacson, tulad ng ginawa mo sa bicameral meeting, tutukan mo ang mga mambabatas para makabuo ng fair, comprehensive and meaningful amendments to Republic Act 9160 (the Anti-Money Laundering Act).

Otherwise, dire consequences await our country. Ang pinakakawawa ... millions of Overseas Filipino Workers and their families.

What can happen:

- Financial sanctions will be imposed globally on all Philippine banking transactions by the Financial Action Task Force.
- There will be heightened scrutiny and stricter screening of remittances to the Philippines.
- This, in turn, will cause delays of remittances to the families of OFWs.
- The delays can drive OFW families to seek unscrupulous sources of money, at usurious rates.
- With more rigorous remittance procedures in place, OFWs may end up paying much, much more in bank charges.

A ₱500,000 ceiling is a more effective deterrent to money laundering.



Laking hirap. Laking abala sa OFWs.

Fight for the crucial Senate bill 1599 you filed which will require all government officials to WAIVE all bank secrecy laws - in relation to their bank accounts - while they are in the service of the nation.

Paalala mo rin, Senator Lacson: Money laundering funds terrorists and promotes drug trafficking. If we don't get tough on this crime, how can we stop the evils that it fuels?

Tama na muna ang politika. Now more than ever, you - our lawmakers - should act as one. It's for the good of the country ... and for the unsung heroes who have never let us down - the Overseas Filipino Workers.

Isipin ang kawawang OFWs natin.

E-mail: pr_sports@inquirer.com.ph
SPORTS
Editor Al S. Mendoza ● Assistant Editor Edwin M. Villanueva

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Ateneo, Masbate, bolster football bids

DUMAGUETE CITY--NCR champion Ateneo de Manila and Masbate Comprehensive National High scored contrasting victories yesterday to bolster their respective bids in the Coke-Go-for-Goal under-16 national football finals at the Silliman ballfield here. The Ateneans whipped La Salle Academy of Iligan, 4-2, while the Masbate boys held off Cebu's Don Bosco Technology Center, 2-1, for their first triumphs in the nationwide youth soccerfest sponsored by Coca-Cola.

NBA ALL-STAR GAME

West beats East in 2 OTs, 155-145

By Keith Parsons
AP Sports Writer

ATLANTA—Yao Ming has seemed comfortable most of his rookie season, showing composure on and off the court, but his first All-Star game might have gotten to him.

Voted a starter for the Western Conference, the Chinese rookie had only two points and two rebounds in 17 minutes, sitting out the fourth quarter and both overtimes.

Shaquille O'Neal, Tim Duncan and Kevin Garnett were the big men who got most of the playing time down the stretch as the West beat the East, 155-145, in double overtime.

"I was going to see how the game went, if I was going to bring him back or not, basically," West coach Rick Adelman said. "It was just a situation, we got down eight points or something and looked like it was over with and then we caught them."

Yao, picked No. 1 overall by the Houston Rockets in last year's draft, became the first rookie to start in the All-Star game since Grant Hill in 1995. His selection was helped by ballots printed in Mandarin for the first time; he outpolled O'Neal by nearly a quarter-million votes, even though Shaq averages nearly 27 points a game and Yao just 13.

But the 2.23-meter (7-foot-6) Yao rarely looked to shoot when he had the ball. His lone basket was a dunk 65 seconds into the game after an alley-oop pass from Houston teammate Steve Francis.

"It's got to be really overwhelming for him," Adelman said of Yao. "His first experience like this and the attention that he garners, you've got to give the young man tremendous credit."

"I think he handles everything so well."

Yao's highlight of the night might have been winning the opening tip from Ben Wallace, finally stepping into the circle after fellow West starters Duncan and Garnett prodded him.

"He was trying to get one of us to jump for him and we were trying to convince him that he was 7-8 and he could win the tap," Duncan quipped. "So it went back and forth for a little while."

Yao did wear a pair of powder blue low-top shoes, a tribute to Michael Jordan's alma mater, North Carolina. The brightly colored shoes clashed with the red uniform of the West, but Jordan was making his final All-Star appearance.

Then again, this game might not be the ideal venue for Yao. A fundamentally sound player whose shooting range extends to the perimeter, he probably was out of his element with all the can-you-top-this shenanigans from the rest of the All-Stars.

YAO

Garnett gets MVP trophy after 6 tries

By RICK GANO
AP Sports Writer

ATLANTA—Kevin Garnett took over when the NBA All-Star game went into double overtime for the first time ever.

The long-armed and talented Minnesota Timberwolves star was voted the game's Most Valuable Player with a game-high 37 points, including nine in the second overtime to spark the West's 155-145 victory over the East on Sunday night.

GARNETT

Garnett hit three consecutive jump shots and scored the first seven points of the second extra period before sealing the victory with a dunk.

Playing in his sixth All-Star game, the 26-year-old Garnett shot 17-of-24 from the field with an array of dunks and jumpers. He also had nine rebounds, five steals and three assists on a night when the stars came out to honor Michael Jordan.

"I went into this knowing that this was Michael's last All-Star game and I know I was going to be playing against him," Garnett said.

"It was my first time with Yao Ming, so I had a bunch of things going through my mind."

Garnett — like Yao, the 2.23-meter (7-foot-6) rookie from China — is a member of the NBA's new generation, one of the players Jordan said will keep the league at a high level after he retires.

Yao Ming noticed only 'coz of MJ's baby-blue shoes

ATLANTA —Yao Ming may be taking the NBA by storm during his rookie season but the towering Chinese center was barely noticeable during his All-Star debut on Sunday.

Yao, who has averaged 13 points a game in his first season, logged 17 minutes of court time but appeared like a shy wallflower alongside some of the NBA's most flamboyant showman all trying to outdo each other.

In fact, the most noticeable thing about Yao's performance were his baby-blue shoes, which he wore as a tribute to Michael Jordan, who wore the same color while playing at the University of North Carolina.

With Jordan making his 14th and final All-Star appearance before retiring at the end of the season, it was hard for anyone besides the five-time league MVP to get much attention.

Certainly, the significance of the evening was not lost on Yao, who like many foreign players grew up idolizing Jordan.

"Today is his All-Star game," said Yao through an interpreter. "I just sit back and enjoy the game because the whole game, for me, is a fun place.

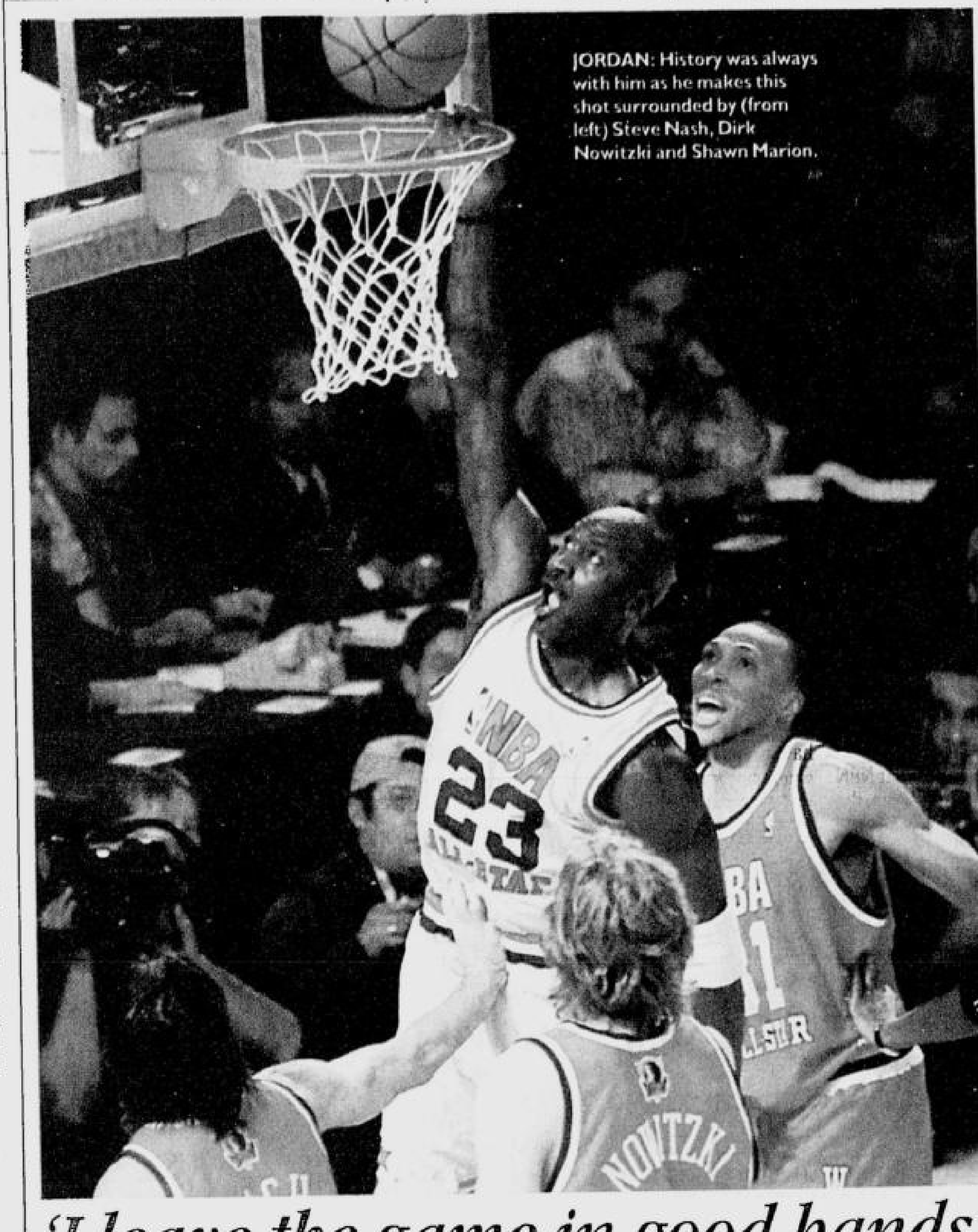
Ivan win eliminates US from Davis Cup

ZAGREB, Croatia — Ivan Ljubicic almost gave up playing Davis Cup six years ago.

The Americans wish he had.

Ljubicic and his Croatian teammates ousted the United States from the first-round of the Davis Cup on Sunday, the second time in three seasons that the Davis Cup's most successful nation has bowed out early.

Ljubicic, 23, won the deciding match when he defeated American No. 1 James Blake 6-3, 6-7 (5), 6-4, 6-3 to give Croatia an insurmountable 3-1 lead. In the inconsequential second singles, Mario Ancic defeated Taylor Dent to give Croatia a 4-1 victory. *AFP*



JORDAN: History was always with him as he makes this shot surrounded by (from left) Steve Nash, Dirk Nowitzki and Shawn Marion.

'I leave the game in good hands'

By Jim Slater
AFP Sports Writer

ATLANTA—Michael Jordan gave his devoted fans more magic moments, then left the basketball stage to heroes of a new era.

Jordan made a surprise start, gave a poignant farewell speech, set an all-time scoring record and made another amazing clutch last-second basket here Sunday before losing in his last National Basketball Association All-Star Game.

"I felt the appreciation from everybody in the building. I really enjoyed it," Jordan said. "I feel the transition has arrived where I can sit back and watch these kids play."

West star Kevin Garnett claimed the MVP honors, but he knew Jordan was the true star.

"I'm in no hurry to see greatness leave," Garnett said. "These are times we need to cherish."

Jordan scored 20 points to finish his 13 All-Star appearances with 262 points, surpassing the career mark of 251 points set by Kareem Abdul-Jabbar in a record 18 All-Star Games. And Jordan missed the 1986 game with a broken foot.

"He's the greatest to ever play the game," West center Shaquille O'Neal said.

40th birthday

Eight days shy of his 40th birthday, Jordan told a celebrity-laden crowd of 20,325 that "I can go home and feel at peace with the game" during a special half-time ceremony.

Jordan was a surprise replacement for Vince Carter in the starting lineup. Fans booed Carter when he was introduced because the Toronto star said weeks ago he would not offer Jordan his starting spot when others had.

"I owed the fans the respect of him being on the court," Carter said. "Right before going out, I told him he should be out there. This is how it's supposed to be. He needed to be out there." Jordan, who said he understood Carter's decision, was trying to ease the pressure on a fellow University of North Carolina star.

Phenomenal jumpshot

"It was a last-minute decision with Vince," Jordan said. "I felt he had taken a beating and he shouldn't have. I didn't want a black cloud over this weekend for me. I didn't want to leave the game that way."

Jordan missed his first seven shots and a potential game-winner in the last seconds of regulation, but sank a phenomenal jump shot over Shawn Marion from the right baseline with 4.8 seconds remaining in over-time.

After giving the East a 138-136 lead, Jordan pumped his fist with joy, the Washington Wizards swingman having writen himself a storybook ending.

"He delivered," East coach Isiah Thomas said. "It was a great shot. It was a great moment. The fans went crazy. It was nice."

But Kobe Bryant was ready to rewrite the master.

East's Jermaine O'Neal shoved Bryant on a three-point shot and the Los Angeles Lakers guard hit 2-of-3 free throws to level at 120-120, Jordan-loving fans booing his every attempt.

Bryant admitted he had never wanted to miss crucial free throws so much in his life, because he knew he was robbing Jordan's magic moment.

"Felt like I had a job to do because I'm in the situation that I need to make these free throws, but the other part of me just didn't want to do it," said Bryant, who got some encouragement from Jordan in his difficult moment.

"He didn't want me to feel like I was feeling," Bryant said. "He wanted me to do everything I could to win. I respect that and understand that. But still, you can't help but be split right down the middle."

Jordan spoke during a half-time ceremony featuring a videotape of his best moments, a career that included six NBA titles with Chicago. A standing ovation lasting 90 seconds greeted Jordan.

Roar to a hush

"It was a good feeling to see everybody embrace him the way they did," East star Allen Iverson said. "He meant everything to the game. He still does."

Jordan smiled as he tried in vain to quiet the crowd, then finally began speaking and brought the roar to a hush, thanking family, friends and fans and passing the torch to the next generation.

"I leave the game in good hands," Jordan said. "So many great stars still in the game, so many great stars rising. I have passed on the things some of the great players — Magic Johnson, Larry Bird — have passed on to me, I pass on to these All-Stars here as well as to the rest of the players in the NBA."

The East, which owns a 32-20 edge in the all-time rivalry, led 23-18 after one quarter, but Jordan's shooting slump led to the fewest combined points for both teams in an All-Star first quarter since the record low 40 in 1953.

Bryant had 22 points, Steve Francis 20 and Tim Duncan and O'Neal each had 19 for the West.

Iverson led the East with 35 points while Tracy McGrady added 29.

Jordan rings curtain down as best scorer

By Steve Keating
Reuters Sports Writer

ATLANTA—Michael Jordan brought the curtain down on his All-Star career with a record breaking performance on Sunday collecting 20 points to become the NBA All-Star game's all-time leading scorer.

While Jordan's Eastern Conference team lost a 155-145 double overtime thriller to the West the result mattered little when the spotlight fell on one man.

Playing in his 13th All-Star contest, Jordan missed his first seven shots, but eventually "His Airness" conjured up some of his old magic holding the crowd spellbound as he surpassed Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's record of 251 points and setting a new benchmark of 262.

Within seconds of his appearance on court it was evident Jordan, needing just 10 points, was not going to leave Atlanta without adding another line to his resume.

Trademark jump

A buzz swept through Philips Arena the moment he stood from his chair and began to strip off his warmups and continued as his team mates searched out the Washington Wizards swingman and repeatedly fed him the ball.

The record came not in a trademark jump shot or gravity-defying dunk but from the foul line with two-minutes left in the third quarter with Jordan calmly sinking both his shots.

A reserve for the first time in 14 All-Star selections (he missed the 1986 game due to injury), the evening began with Jordan accepting an unexpected offer from the Toronto Raptors' Vince Carter to take his place in East's starting lineup.

Jordan had rejected similar gestures from the Philadelphia 76ers Allen Iverson and Orlando Magic's Tracy McGrady to give up their spots, saying he didn't believe it was right to start ahead of those voted in by the fans.

Carter, once considered Jordan's heir apparent, was the one player who had continually refused to consider giving up his spot and was criticized by his fellow players, coaches and fans for what was viewed as a lack of respect for Jordan.

During the pre-game introductions Carter was the only player to be booed with the crowd unaware he had stepped aside.

Standing ovation

Jordan was introduced to a thundering standing ovation, and it was apparent the game, televised live to 212 countries in 41 languages and reaching a potential global audience of 3.1 billion people, would be the beginning of his farewell tour.

The league paid tribute to the man rated by many as the best to ever play the game with a lavish halftime show, that included recording artist Mariah Carey dedicating her hit "Hero" to Jordan while performing in a number 23 Bulls jersey he made famous leading Chicago to six NBA titles.

As Carey called Jordan onto the stage, the crowd again rose to its feet and for nearly two minutes refused to let him speak.

When he finally could, Jordan said he was at peace with his decision to retire.

"I want to thank my family for sticking with me for so many years as I chased my dreams of playing basketball," said Jordan above the applause. "I leave the game in good hands.

"So many great stars still in the game, so many great stars rising and playing the game.

"I think you for your support and now I can go home and feel at peace with the game of basketball." Jordan has turned his back on the NBA twice before only to make comebacks but this time, worn down by knee injuries and his 40th birthday looming later this month, he has said there would be no more encores and he left the court with the sellout crowd chanting his name.

Quarter-final jigsaw complete

PARIS—Switzerland, Sweden, Russia and the conquerors of the United States, Croatia, completed the Davis Cup quarter-final jigsaw on Sunday, bringing a European flavour to April's last eight matches. France, Spain, Australia and Argentina had already claimed their berths with 3-0 winning leads from Saturday in this men's tennis world championship team event, meaning Europe now have six countries still in the competition. *AFP*

Buhain requests AFP to excuse national athletes

By Marc Anthony Reyes

BUHAIN

THE PHILIPPINE Sports Commission has sent the Armed Forces of the Philippines an excuse letter for 247 enlisted men who are training as athletes and coaches for the national team to the Vietnam Southeast Asian Games.

PSC chair Eric Buhain said that he already got a favorable response from the AFP, which has been very supportive of the agency during big international competitions like the SEA Games, Asian Games and the Olympics.

"They have accommodated our request during the Busan Asian Games and I think they will also be amenable this time," said Buhain, who met with AFP officials yesterday.

In his letter addressed to AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Dionisio Santiago, Buhain requested "for the immediate granting of the Detached Service Order for all enlisted military personnel who are actively participating as national athletes and coaches for the Philippine Team."

Buhain stressed the importance of having the athletes excused considering that most of the national team members come from the military like the boxers, track and field athletes and shooters.

The PSC chief noted that most of the concerned athletes "are under the rigorous training and tune-up sessions in preparation for their final competition in the SEA Games in December."

"These men and women of the AFP comprise the backbone of Philippine sports," said Buhain. "Disciplined and committed to offer their sacrifice for the honor and glory of the country."

Buhain earlier said that the country needs to finish at least third place in the December SEA Games to at least have a big momentum going to the 2005 staging slated in the country.

The Philippines won 31 gold medals and placed fifth behind Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam during the 2001 Kuala Lumpur SEA Games.

PUCAY: Gunning for third victory in Tagaytay. Inset is Casas, also a double winner. PDI PHOTO

Gent's circuit visits Orchard

THE BRUTAL conditions of the previous leg should have prepared them well enough for another imminent danger as the men on tour play the Palmer course of the Orchard Golf and Country Club for the 11th leg of the First Gentleman's Professional Golf Circuit presented by San Miguel Beer starting today.

Shaken by the gale-force winds and incensed by the greens that were both fast and difficult to read last week in Tagaytay, the touring pros should have made the right adjustments they badly needed for the Battle at the Orchard.

The greens will be just as tough and the winds, yes, not for the faint-hearted.

But what could make the task tougher at the Orchard are the long holes that require a lot more than the low shots last week's winner Rey Pagunsan used to end his long title-drought in the revived circuit bankrolled by First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and San Miguel Beer with WG&A Super Ferry as the official carrier.

"You need an assortment of shots to tame the course, low and high shots, fades and hooks and most especially good putts," said Orchard golf director Andy Maglipon who is with the organizing Federation of Golf Clubs Philippines, Inc.

What could be an interesting side-event is the battle for the Order of Merit honors where the embattled Order of Merit leader Mars Pucay with total earnings of P377,250 will try to keep it for the third straight week after he had posted back-to-back wins in Mindanao.

Breathing down his neck is Canlubang leg winner Richard Sinfuego (P355,000) and the in-form Cassius Casas, who has P344,750 so far from his victories in Del Monte and Sherwood Hills. Pagunsan's win has brought him more than 10 rungs higher to solo sixth with P212,250.

There is much pressure for the frontrunners to get their games fine tuned before the series winds up next week at the Manila Southwoods.

After the decision of Wack Wack to scrap the Philippine Open, the pros will have another chance to vie for more money in a cash-rich tournament put up by Ricky Razon of ICTSI and separate from the First Gentleman's Circuit two weeks from now at the Country Club.

Also seeing action are Benjie Magada, who is a two-leg winner like Casas and Pucay, Bacolod champion Angelo Que and Sta. Elena titlist Antonio Lascuna.

The Order of Merit (After 10 legs)

(1.) M. Pucay P377,250; (2.) R. Sinfuego P355,000; (3.) C. Casas P344,750; (4.) B. Magada P299,750; (5.) T. Lascuna P254,000; (6.) R. Pagunsan P212,250; (7.) R. Pactolerin P206,125; (8.) E. Salvador P199,250; (9.) D. delos Santos P143,250; (10.) A. Que P140,500; (11.) V. Santia P127,250; (12.) Rr. Cuello P136,750; (13.) C. Villaroman P135,250; (14.) C. Ababa P135,000; (15.) R. Sasutil P134,500.

OGCC must approve NBN-PBA deal

By June Navarro

THE FRANCHISE agreement between the PBA and NBN-4 on the airing of the games is almost a done deal except for one major requirement: the opinion of the Office of Government Corporate Counsel.

The OGCC opinion is the only missing piece that would seal the deal between both parties and should government station NBN-4 get a favorable response, it would secure the television rights of the PBA with no further hitches.

Some quarters inside the PBA, however, fear that the OGCC might render a negative opinion, thus putting in peril the letter of credit issued by Manila Bank and, at worst, forcing the league bigwigs to scrap the entire deal.

But NBN general manager Joey Isabelo remained confident, saying the OGCC wouldn't render a negative opinion since the PBA television coverage is very advantageous to the government.

In fact, Isabelo added that NBN and the PBA are set to sign the agreement not later than Thursday pending the OGCC clearance.

Meanwhile, PBA chair Jun Cabalan foresees a positive scenario when the plan for a parallel broadcast pushes through.

"Parallel broadcast is basically an improvement from the earlier proposal of NBN-4. I see positive changes in the coverage of the games the moment it takes effect," said Cabalan, a top executive at San Miguel Corporation and Barangay Ginebra's representative to the board.

Originally, NBN-4 and IBC-13 had proposed only a simulcast where both stations will carry the PBA games live, no different from the other as far as broadcasting is concerned.

NBN's parallel broadcast with IBC, on the other hand, gives viewers an option to choose between a coverage that features a younger breed of broadcasters and a basketball show done the traditional way.

Under the proposal, IBC will air the games on a magnitude similar to the coverage done by Studio 23 during the UAAP basketball wars last year.

On adopting the Studio 23 framework, IBC is bound to attract high-end advertisers and employ upcoming television analysts.

In gist, IBC's television coverage has a target audience belonging to the upper classes of society while NBN will zero in on the market which caters to fans from all walks of life.

"It's definitely a good option. It's like having two presentations on the same product," said Cabalan.

7-cock derby tonight

FIRST class cockfight action resumes today as the "2nd LGBA Pasabong 7-Cock Derby" elimination round gets underway at the Mandaluyong Coliseum. The finals is on Thursday, Feb. 13.

Last night a total of 51 fights were held in the "Birthday Special 5-Cock Derby" hosted by engineer Sonny Lagon of Laguna. Results were not available as of press time.

Today's derby will feature prominent Luzon gamefowl breeders like Sandy Javier of Batangas, Mauro Prieto of Palawan, Peping Cojuangco and Esting Teopaco of Tarlac, lawyer Joey Mendoza of Rizal, Alfred and John Reyes of Pangasinan, Jay Sonza and Spider Alcala of Masbate, former Congressman Amado Bagatsing of MAnila, Rep. Mawrence Wacnang of Kalinga Province, Danny Pineda and Danny Lim of Pamapanga.

The LGBA 7-Cock championship derby is slated on March 24, 25 and 27. At stake is P1 million while entry fee is only P10,000. The LGBA Cocker of the Year 2003 will be known after this event.

For inquiries, contact 531-4003, 531-4005, 534-4110 and 535-2341.

UE fencers snare 6 Escrima Liga golds

UNIVERSITY of the East pocketed six out of 11 gold medals at stake in the third and final leg of the 2nd Escrima Liga National Interschool Fencing Championships held last weekend at the Philsports in Pasig City.

The golds came from Joel Landicho (men individual foil), Alex Ragot (men's individual epee), Emmanuel Bongiad (men's individual sabre) and Ronella Espadilla, who was also named Athena Female Fencer of the Year for her outstanding performance in sabre in all three legs.

Virgie Nuestro of UP Manila won the women's individual foil and Justine Gabionza of UST topped the women's individual epee. Ateneo de Manila grabbed the gold in the men's team epee and women's team foil while UST won gold in the women's team epee.

UE, which is handled by national team standouts Rufel Endriano and Rolando Canlas, was crowned overall champion followed by UST and Ateneo. A total of 15 schools joined the tournament supported by the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, Athena Milk, Philippine Sports Commission and the Philippine Amateur Fencers Association. Present during the awarding ceremony were POC president Celso Dayrit, PCSO public relations officer Darsey Geronimo and TEAM Ventures president Emmet Penson.

TEAM Ventures organized the Escrima Liga for the second straight year in an effort to help grassroots development in sports and believing that school sports is a fertile ground for producing national team-quality athletes.

Letran rules high school chess

LETRAN High School proved its superiority in high school team chess when it scored back-to-back shutout victories in the last two rounds to win the first-ever High School Chess Team Open tournament on Sunday at the multi-purpose gymnasium of the Philippine Science High School (PSHS) in Diliman, Quezon City.

The four-time NCAA champion clobbered Ateneo-B, 4-0, in the penultimate round then overhauled La Immaculada Concepcion-A (LICS-A) team's half-point lead with a 4-0 whitewash of LICS-B in the final round. LICS-A could only manage a 2-2 score against Diliman Preparatory School in the last round.

Letran's team, composed of Julius De Ramos, Vic Neil Villanueva, Jerommel Gabriel, Aaron Rivas, Lehl Day Laceste and Angelo Macaraig, finished with 24.3 points in the seven-round Swiss system tournament organized by the Active Chess Center of Asia Inc. (Acca) and sanctioned by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines.

LICS-A settled for second place with 23 points. Ateneo de Manila-A and Parañaque National HS (La Huerta Annex) shared third-fourth places with identical 18.5 points.

Letran received the top cash prize of P15,000 and trophy while LICS-A got P7,000 plus trophy. Letran's coach National Master Roland Perez, praised the determination and resiliency of his wards, especially when they lost to LICS-A in the third round.

He also said that the support given by the parents of the team members played a key role in their triumph.

The tournament was sponsored by Land Bank, Philam Foundation, Tabilog Cargo Services, PSHS, Belgosa Media Systems with the support of the Department of Education, Grandmaster Eugenio Torre Chess Institute (Getci), PSHS PTA Batch 06, Glutaphos, EEC Graphics and Manila Hotel.

Tatap tilt on Feb. 15

TEAM Nueva Ecija Foundation, Inc. will host the 1st Tatap National Quarterly Age-Group Table Tennis Championships on Feb. 15-16 at the Megacenter-The Mall in Cabanatuan City.

Expected to grace the opening ceremonies are Tatap president Victor Valbuena, secretary-general Oscar Santelices and Region III vice-president Edward Thomas Joson.

For more details, please contact Robbie or Mylene at Tatap office, tel. 522-1885.

Nutrilicious formalizes PBL entry

CHUA

By Dennis U. Eroa

NUTRILICIOUS, a leading fruits drink and beverages company, yesterday confirmed that it will see action in the PBL conference slated next month.

"While supporting basketball talents, the PBL is also a vehicle to promote our products. This is also one way of giving back something to our supporters," Rogelio Nemeño, president of the Nutrilicious Food Company yesterday told the INQUIRER.

Nutrilicious supplies fruit drinks to some 2,000 big and small companies and sells its products to Japan, Canada and other countries.

Among its customers are Chowking, Burger Machine, Air Philippines and Philippine Air Lines. Nutrilicious main branch is located at Pateros in Pasig City.

Meanwhile, the PBL paid tribute to Bill Wong, a pillar of the Cebu Basketball Federation.

Team manager Jesse Chua said he is forming a competitive team composed of collegiate stars and veteran players.

"We want to make an impact in our initial season. The PBL is a tough league and you need a tough team to have a winning season," Chua, former Chowking and Shark manager said.

Wong died during a diving accident in Badian, Cebu.

"He's a great loss," said PBL Commissioner Chino Trinidad.

Dioceldo Sy, chair of the PBL board, said the PBL lost a friend in Wong.

Wong brought Cebuano stars to the PBL. He was an executive of Mama's Love and Casino Ethyl Alcohol.

SPORTS TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Mangulat

BASKETBALL: NBA All-Star Game 9 a.m./ (r) 8 p.m.

GOLF: This is the PGA Tour, 5 p.m. (r), Star Sports

AMERICAN FOOTBALL: NFL Blast, 9 a.m., ESPN

BOWLING: USA vs Europe Tenpin Bowling 2002, 8 a.m. (r), ESPN

CGU Asian Bowling Tour, 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. (r), ESPN

SWIMMING: World Cup Swimming, 2 p.m. (r), Star Sports

Love subdues Lehman by 1

PEBBLE BEACH, California—Davis Love won the Pebble Beach National Pro-Am Sunday, and luckily this time he didn't need a dramatic rally to do it.

Love sank a 30-inch putt on the final hole to win the tournament for the second time in three years, posting a one-shot victory over Tom Lehman.

Winless since his victory here in 2001, Love carded a final-round four-under-par 68 at Pebble Beach Golf Links and finished with a 72-hole total of 14-under 274.

Canadian Mike Weir, the winner last week at the Bob Hope Classic, tied for third with Tim Herron at 276.

Jim Furyk, the second-round leader, shared fifth place with Rocco Mediate at 279. *AFP*

Wie cops 43rd in Pearl Open

AIEA, Hawaii—Thirteen-year-old Michelle Wie shot a 5-over 77 in the final round of the Hawaii Pearl Open on Sunday, finishing with an 8-over 224 to tie for 43rd place.

Playing from the championship tees at the Pearl Country Club, Wie was the only female in the tournament field of 192, and the youngest overall.

Greg Meyer, a Japanese tour player who is the assistant golf pro at Pearl, shot a final round 2-over 74 to win the $80,000, 54-hole tournament at 7-under 209. Steve Schneiter and Hiroyuki Naito of Japan tied for second, one stroke behind Meyer. *AP*

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1991, Robert Pactolerin fired a 73 to capture via a sudden death victory the 8th Carlsberg Masters at the Villamor course. Also today in 1991, Herman Suizo clocked 2:22:46 to bag the 9th Pilipinas International Marathon at the CCP grounds.

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■ Convict mayor says prison officials planted fake cash A22

METRO MANILA TRAFFIC MESS

BF sees positive change

By Leila Salaverria and Nelson Flores

THE WORST of the traffic mess may be behind us, as Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando yesterday said that he is now beginning to see a positive change in the flow of vehicular traffic in the metropolis.

"I believe there is less traffic now than there was last Monday," he told reporters yesterday during his weekly press conference.

Fernando attributed last week's heavy traffic congestion to overreacting motorists, who were not used to the changes brought about by the suspension of the Unified Vehicular Volume Reduction Program, popularly known as "color-coding."

"The people overreacted," Fernando said. "The problem is, drivers get tense when there are changes. When they are tense, they tend to break the rules."

But he was quick to add that it is too early to decide on the fate of the UVVRP, saying he'd rather let the whole three-week trial period run its course.

"It's an experiment, anything can happen," he said. "We did not promise to know anything. If we knew what the results would be, then we wouldn't have conducted an experiment."

Fernando also extended an apology to all those who got stuck in traffic last week.

"To those who were inconvenienced, I am asking for their pardon," he said.

But critics continued to hit Fernando, demanding the lifting of the color-coding suspension.

Mandaluyong City Mayor Ben-

WORST/ A22

THERE isn't nothing like a police dog—like the ones shown here in the K-9 kennel of the national police—to save the day for Balikbayan David Cubangbang. Maria, a Belgian Malinois police dog, delivered the victim from the clutches of a woman snatcher in Caloocan City (see story below).

PDI FILE

Dog collars woman snatcher

By Tina Santos

A WELL-TRAINED police dog yesterday proved its worth as a member of the Caloocan City Special Weapons and Tactics bomb squad after it snagged a 30-year-old female snatcher who grabbed the cellular phone of a 52-year-old *balikbayan* near the Light Rail Transit terminal in Monumento, Caloocan City.

With the help of Maria, a rookie 1 1/2-year-old Belgian Malinois police dog,

suspect Esther Cruz, 30, a native of Pampanga and a resident of Daang-Bakal, Caloocan, was collared and hauled off to jail.

David Cubangbang, a librarian who is set to return to Canada next week, could only heave a sigh of relief after he got back his brand-new Nokia 6100, which he had just bought for P20,000.

Initial investigation revealed that Cubangbang, of Gatcharin, Arayat, Pampanga, was waiting for a ride home at around 11:30 a.m. near the LRT station in Monumento when Cruz suddenly snatched his phone.

It was at this point that the commotion caught the attention of Jojo Rodis, a 10-year veteran K9 handler who was at the area making rounds in the LRT station.

With Cruz on the run, Rodis and Maria gave chase until the duo subdued the fleeing snatcher.

Maria, who kept on barking and growling, apparently scared the suspect out of her wits and was left with no other choice but to give up or face the fury of the canine who is ready to attack once commanded by Rodis.

The suspect remains detained at the police headquarters while appropriate charges was being readied against her.

Rodis said Maria is only one of his at least 30 well-trained canines.

"Maria is very intelligent and well-trained," said Rodis, who rents out his dogs to other local government, private banks and building owners for at least P45,000 a month.

Rodis added that Maria, who has been undergoing training for more than a year now, is very tame but could also be very mean.

Maria is used in securing populous areas such as malls and the LRT, Rodis said.

"She is an invaluable member of the force, especially now with what she has done. Now she has proven that her role is vital not only in sniffing bombs but also in other police operations," Rodis added.

OFW comes home to a dead child and deranged mate who killed her

By Philip Tubeza

OVERSEAS Filipino worker Marlyn Perez, 29, arrived from Saudi Arabia on Thursday to confront the suspect in the killing of her 3-year-old daughter yesterday at the Manila police headquarters.

The suspect: Perez's own husband Victor, 27, who allegedly stabbed to death their daughter Melody and then threw her from their fourth floor apartment in Tondo, Manila last Jan. 27.

VICTOR Perez

Perez said she wanted to see the suspect and make sure he was behind bars.

Victor was presented to Perez at about 10 a.m. yesterday.

She pinched and slapped Victor, who in turn accused his wife of infidelity, said Detective Raul Olavario, of the Western Police District-homicide section.

Victor, who admitted to be a drug dependant, said he could not forgive Perez for cheating on him. He said that she did not really go abroad and that he thinks she's on drugs.

Police found plastic sachets with shabu residue, a tooter, and bunsen burner inside Victor's room in Building E, Sambahayan sa Rawis Tenement Building on Sta. Fe Street, Tondo.

He told police he hooked on shabu after Perez left to work as a domestic helper in Al-Khobar, Saudi Arabia in October last year.

"I told her not to leave but she insisted," said Victor, who earned a living selling tools like screwdrivers and pliers.

Police said the couple has a 7-year-old son, whom Victor sent to his aunt last November because he could not take care of him.

Victor said he wants him back and accused Perez of hiding their son from him.

He said he was sorry for what he did but he

OFW/ A22

Naia sale a joke, lawyer says

By Christian Esguerra

PARAÑAQUE Mayor Joey Marquez may have lived up to his billing as ace comedian when he auctioned off the Ninoy Aquino International Airport last Friday.

Describing the auction as "a comedy at the expense of public ignominy," lawyer Oliver Lozano yesterday said Marquez should not have sold Naia because the move would only embarrass the country among tourists and foreign investors.

"While it was legitimate for Parañaque to auction off Naia," Lozano said, "it would create the bad impression that our country's premier airport is so cash-strapped that it could not even pay its taxes."

Lozano is at the forefront of another controversy hounding Naia. He is the lead counsel of Nayong Pilipino concessionaires who were forced out of the theme park last year to give way to the airport's Terminal 3 project.

The Parañaque government gained possession of key portions of the airport, including its runway, in the absence of bidders in last week's public auction.

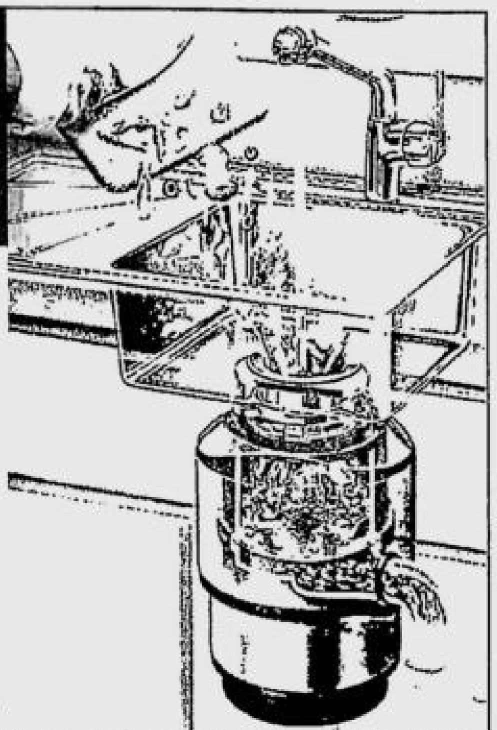
Marquez said the Manila International Airport Authority has one year to redeem the property to keep the local government from completely owning it. If MIAA still fails to settle its tax obligation, the mayor said Parañaque would lease the property to the airport management.

Lozano claimed that although Parañaque has gained full control of the property, the city has no guarantee that the MIAA will pay its taxes or even the rent, if the airport management does not want to settle its obligations.

"This is where the next phase of the comedy begins," Lozano said. "The strategy may have provided Parañaque with legal leverage now, but it could not really force MIAA to pay in the future."

Lozano said Marquez should have not resorted to auction and instead waited for the Supreme Court to decide if the MIAA was indeed bound to pay realty taxes to the local government.

He also said Parañaque and the MIAA could have settled the tax row with arbitration.



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The Hope of Freedom and Justice! Is Back!

A mother's plaintive cry

On Target

Ramon Tulfo

THE HOUSE of Representatives has passed on third reading a bill that penalizes husbands who inflict physical, as well as sexual, violence on their wives. Depending on the gravity of the offense, the erring partner could be jailed for life.

How ironic, because a former member of the House might be one of the first to be charged under the proposed law!

The former congressman, who has since become a very prominent politician, projects an image of being mild- mannered and a good family man.

* * *

But the truth is, according to his critics, he beats up his wife during their spats. The beatings have become so severe lately the wife has been going to a psychiatrist.

"This hypocrite talks about family values during speeches before students," said this politician's neighbor in an upper middle-class village, "but how can he defend his stand on the family when he inflicts harm on his wife?"

But I am told the politician doesn't lay a hand on his mistress, a fellow lawyer, with whom he has two children.

***

But the politician's dalliances don't end with his mistress. He's a sex fiend, according to those who know him well.

He used to get girls as young as 14 from a defunct TV show which featured promising young stars. The pimp for the young girls was the show's host.

Family values, huh!

* * *

When he was in another legislative "house," this politician was not very popular among his colleagues.

Why? Because he's a know-it-all.

A former colleague also said this politician had a holier-than-thou attitude. "*Kunwari kakampi pa raw siya ng mga babae eh nambubugbog pala ng Misis*," the colleague said.

* * *

There are several reasons why Sen. Juan Flavier should be favored over the other presidential timber.

He has the common touch, a real concern for the poor, having been a barrio doctor before he was thrust into the limelight.

Flavier is sincere. He has a terrific sense of humor, a trait most politicians don't have because all they care about is how to accumulate wealth. He's not a traditional politician or *trapo*, like most other presidential aspirants.

And, he doesn't beat up his wife. *Kasi, mas malaki sa kanya* (he! he! he!).

* * *

How very ironic that the Bureau of Immigration, which is headed by a woman, wants to deport a Brazilian national who's the estranged wife of a prominent Filipino.

Sandra de Carvalho's marriage to Henry Ocier, scion of a wealthy Chinese-Filipino family, is blessed with three children. Henry's family owns the Belle Resources in Tagaytay City.

Don't immigration people have hearts?

* * *

I said in my column of Saturday, Feb. 8, that our immigration bureau tended to side with Filipinos in their tiffs with foreigners even if those Filipinos are clearly at fault.

A case in point is the harassment by the immigration bureau of my friend, Curtis Perry, an investor inside the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA), who had a drunken brawl with a Filipino in a bar inside the SBMA complex.

Perry is scared he might be deported by the immigration bureau as a result of that brawl which was started by the Filipino.

* * *

Sandra de Carvalho has a similar case, only that her opponent is her estranged husband, who belongs to a moneyed family.

The husband wants her deported so he can have all three children to himself.

Their children are Vinicius, 12; Victor, 10; and William, 9. If the courts were to decide who would have custody of the boys, Sandra would be it.

* * *

Apparently, that's the reason Sandra's estranged husband, Henry Ocier, wants her out of the country fast.

Ocier doesn't want to let go of their children who have Caucasian features like their mother and none of his Chinese looks. *Mga guapo kasi.*

It's a fight between a husband and wife for the custody of their children.

Why is the Bureau of Immigration interfering in a marital quarrel?

* * *

Don't you at the immigration bureau have children of your own?

Why are you deaf to a mother's plaintive cry for custody of her children?

Are you so blind you refuse to see her point in wanting to stay in the country so she can be near her children?

If you guys at the Bureau of Immigration are heartless, then perhaps it's time for President Macapagal-Arroyo, herself a mother, to intervene on Sandra's behalf.

VACC chooses top officers from victims

By Jerome Aning

A RAPE victim's guardian and a kidnap victim are now the top officers of the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption.

Quezon City barangay chair Martin "Bubut" Diño and Cory Quirino were voted president and vice president by the VACC Board of Trustees last Feb. 6 after a vicious leadership squabble.

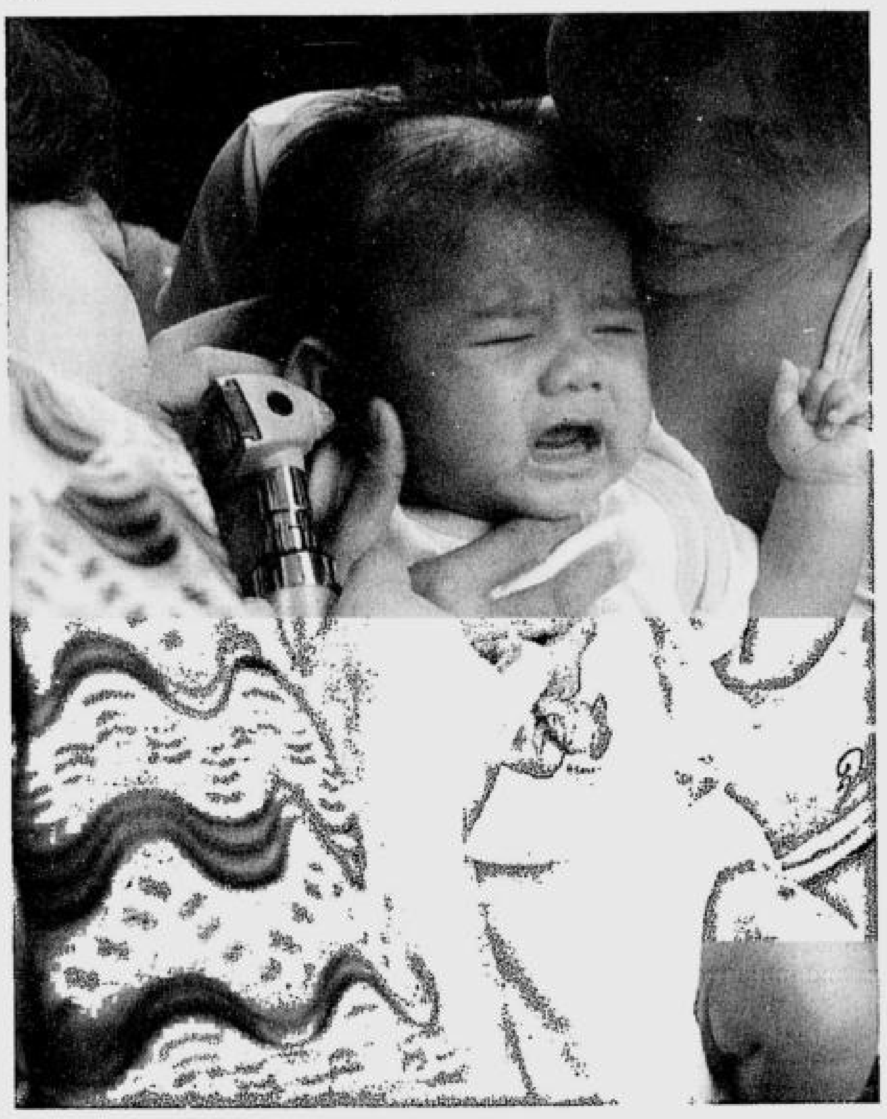
Diño was the guardian of child rape victim Baby Echegaray, whose father Leo was convicted of the rape and was executed in 1999 under the restored death penalty law.

Quirino is a television personality who was kidnapped in Quezon province in 1997.

She escaped from her abductors and was eventually rescued by police and agents of the National Bureau of Investigation.

Diño and Quirino made their first public policy pronouncement yesterday by calling for peace in the midst of rising crime rate in the country and the impending United States-led war against Iraq.

The VACC is concerned about the possible consequences of the war on the country's economy and peace and order, Diño said in a press statement.



CHILD CARE
Help for this baby comes in the form of a medical mission, courtesy of the Kalinga ng Simbahan ng Pamayananan, a monthy medical service at the Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish Church in Cubao, Quezon City. ROGER MARGALLO

Convict mayor says prison officials planted fake cash

By Christian Esguerra

A FORMER Mindanao town mayor convicted of murder yesterday accused prison and police officials of planting counterfeit money worth about P300,000 in his prison cell in Muntinlupa to justify his transfer to the disciplinary chamber or "bartolina."

Rey Yap, a former mayor in Misamis Occidental, yesterday said that his political opponents wanted him moved to another cell where they could kill him.

"My political opponents are behind this," Yap told the INQUIRER. "They had me moved to another cell so they could easily have me liquidated there."

New Bilibid Prisons officials, backed by members of the Metro Manila Police, raided Yap's cell at the maximum security compound last Feb. 5 and supposedly found the counterfeit money along with a cellular phone and other communication equipment.

Yap was with drug convict Peter Co who allegedly yielded P178,000 cash, mobile phones, drug paraphernalia, and other prohibited items during the raid.

Yap and his brother Roy are serving life sentences after they were convicted of masterminding the 1992 murder of their political opponent, Victorio Cebedo in Rizal, Zamboanga del Norte.

The case is on appeal before the Supreme Court.

In a letter to prisons director Ricardo Macala, Yap claimed members of the raiding team initially found no contraband when they arrived at his cell at about 11 a.m. on Feb. 5.

He said that after about five minutes, one of them returned with a bundle of cash and mixed the amount with Yap's P68,000.

Yap said in his letter that the money was for his lawyers "who would handle my defense in another trumped up murder case... I am not foolish to pay my lawyers (with) counterfeit money."

Macala said yesterday that he had ordered an investigation to determine if police and his men had fabricated evidence against Yap.

But he already expressed doubt over Yap's allegation, saying that the raid was conducted in the presence of top prison officials.

He said Metro Manila police chief Reynaldo Velasco had asked him to authorize the raid two weeks earlier.

Residents raise hell over noise pollution in Libis

By Alcuin Papa and Agnes Donato

THE PARTY may be close to over in Libis.

Bars and restaurants lining the hip strip patronized mostly by high-living youngsters are facing closure after residents in the Libis area have complained of the noise and traffic.

Aside from raising a racket, some of the establishments in Libis were found to be operating without permits. Other owners reportedly allowed gambling within their premises, according to Dr. Arden Magtoto, president of the Acropolis Greens Homeowners Association.

In a letter of complaint submitted to Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte and Councilor Ariel Inton, Magtoto named the establishments as the Mazzo Bar and Restaurant, which allegedly operates an off-track betting station, the Sage Internet Cafe, which allegedly operates an online casino gaming system, Anthro Bar, Aruba Bar and Restaurant, Mystica Bar and Restaurant, Nucleuz Bar, Padi's Point, Pier 1 Bar and Grill, Sibil Bar and Restaurant, Star Trax 2 Rave, 3rd Dimension, Velvet Lounge, and the Zegway Comedy Bar.

Another bar, Rockstar, is allegedly owned and operated by actress Rica Paralejo.

"The noise from these establishments have been affecting the health and well-being of our residents and our village," Residents said in their complaint. "These establishments are visible and blatant exercises of public disorder, disturb(ing) the peace of our neighborhood."

The Acropolis homeowners said that the Pier 1 Bar and Grill, for instance, was "an open-air establishment which keeps the residents ... awake, not only with the sound of its music but also the sound of its day-to-day operations, such as the clattering of utensils, stacking of beer bottles, laughs and noise from waiters and customers, etc."

The association also said that none of the bars were issued barangay clearances and clearances from their village for their operation.

Magtoto also claimed in his letter that "many of the establishments have long been operating without a proper Mayor's Permit.

The residents want the establishments padlocked until the establishment owners get to soundproof their premises.

City Council members are due to file a resolution calling for an investigation of the establishments and to check if the owners and operators have secured and complied with all the necessary requirements.

Rockstar, Mystica Bar, Anthro Bar, Zegway and Star Trax 2 Rave have already been ordered closed after the association complained of noise.

But the closure was lifted after a brief two-week suspension.

OFW comes home to a dead child and deranged mate

From page A21

kept on blaming his wife for his troubles.

He told police that he saw his wife inside their apartment building before he killed their daughter. He said he tried to call Perez but she did not listen to him.

Police said Perez had written the suspect a letter dated Dec. 12 last year, saying that she loved him and missed him and their daughter. She also asked him to write her back and to send her pictures, police said.

Victor claimed his wife's letters were "not in her handwriting."

The suspect has been charged with parricide before the Manila City Prosecutor's Office.

The fiscal set no bail for him.

BF sees positive change

From page A21

jamin Abalos Jr. yesterday asked Fernando to end the suspension following mounting public complaints about the worsening traffic in the city.

Abalos said with the suspension of the UVVRP, the usual 20-minute drive from Gen. Kalentong Street to Edsa-Shaw Boulevard Crossing became 1 hour and 20 minutes.

Abalos said he earlier agreed to suspend the UVVRP if only "to be objective and give the project its day in court."

An MMC resolution suspended the UVVRP for three weeks in the whole of Metro Manila except Makati.

Fernando yesterday said he is still studying whether or not the lifting of the UVVRP suspension would need the approval of the Metro Manila Council.

"I might call for a meeting with the Metro Manila Council immediately and then we would decide then (whether or not to lift the suspension in Mandaluyong)," he said. "It's embarrassing to the council if I decide on my own."

Figures from the MMDA show that traffic flow on Edsa was faster in some areas when the UVVRP was suspended, as compared to November, although officials said the figures are inconclusive and could not be attributed solely to the UVVRP suspension.

On the Southbound lane, from Monumento to Santolan, traffic was faster during the morning (21.24 kph as compared to 18.71) and early evening (31.58 kph compared to 29.24), but lagged around noontime (20.32 as compared to 29.24).

On the northbound lane from Santolan to Monumento, morning traffic was slower (35.29 kph as compared to 39.03), and the same goes at noontime (28.37 as compared to 31.42). Early evening travel time was essentially unchanged (22.60 as compared to 22.57).

From Santolan to Roxas Boulevard, travel time generally increased in the mornings (28.37 kph as compared to 20.65), noontime (28.16 as compared to 20.65) and early evening 16.61 as compared to 16.40).

From Roxas Boulevard to Santolan, travel time in the morning was slower (29.32 as compared to 36.88). It quickened at noon (33.75 as opposed to 29.70) and slowed down again during the earl evening (10.46 as compared to 14.71).

SEE IT FIRST!
SM CINEMA
ADVANCE SCREENING
INVITATIONAL DWTM PREMIERE
on February 11, 2003
7:30 pm
SM MEGAMALL
CINEMA 3
MTRCB RATING: PG13
Regular Showing on February 12, 2003 at the SM CINEMAS
ALISON LOHMAN ROBIN WRIGHT PENN MICHELLE PFEIFFER RENÉE ZELLWEGER
Where does a mother end and a daughter begin?
WHITE OLEANDER

Man-killing 'Chicken' roams Tondo, cops warn

By Philip Tubeza

A MAN called Chicken yesterday turned cocky and shot dead his neighbor in Tondo, Manila.

The suspect, known only as "Manok" (chicken), managed to escape after he killed Jorge M. Obilas, 25, of 221 Lakandula St. Tondo, Manila, according to Detective Raul Olavario, of the Western Police District-homicide section.

The suspect, who was described as 24 to 26 years old, fair-complexioned, and 5-foot-4 tall is on the run, police said.

Obilas was killed allegedly for trying to beat up the suspect's kid brother, police said. He died from a gunshot wound in the neck.

The shooting happened at 5:35 a.m. yesterday inside the home of the victim's friend in Tondo.

Police said the suspect first shot Obilas on Sunday night, but missed. Obilas escaped, but the suspect looked for him and found him inside a friend's house yesterday.

Detective Olavario said the suspect used a homemade shotgun to kill Obilas.

Obilas was declared dead on arrival at the Gat Andres Memorial Medical Center.

Police are now hunting down the suspect.

Hans Bruman unveils silver collection

SILVER is said to be one of the most malleable and lustrous metals on earth. These days, it certainly ranks as a popular choice of material for making jewelry – considered a hot and trendy accessory to have right now.

Silver rings, earrings, necklaces, bracelets, anklets – name it, you'll likely come across someone wearing it. After all, there are now a lot of varieties to chose from that could very well fit one's personality and lifestyle.

But what makes each piece (or a shop that carries such pieces) unique from another lies in the gems used, the design, the quality and the craftsmanship. You could say that a combination of these factors is what gets our attention.

Lucky for us, here is someone who is able to put all these things into play; a man who has had a considerable experience – and success – in creating such timeless pieces (and who also happens to have had successfully launched his line of jade jewelry quite recently.

Jeweler Hans Brumann finally tells us why he chose silver as his material for his newest project.

"I would say that silver jewelry has become very popular for the last 10 years," says the Swiss-born Brumann, who has been in the jewelry business for more than 40 years. He further affirms the fine qualities of his metal. "Silver has the most shine, the most brilliance, among all metals. It has more luster than gold, or platinum. It's also softer than gold, so it's very nice to work with. For a goldsmith (like me), it's probably (one of) my favorite metals to work.

Brumann proves just how easy (and enjoyable) it is to work with silver, as he launches his new line just in time for Valentine's.

"Our silver jewelry is definitely more colorful. We have them in different colors and shapes. They come with matching earrings, rings and pendants," he explains. "When you look at it, you'll notice that it's not translucent – it's opaque. They all have a very fresh look. We have modern designs that go with many age groups." Indeed, his pieces – flowers, geometric shapes and all – could probably entice both 12 and 40-years old. And to think they are as affordable as they are easy on the eyes, with prices ranging from P2,000 to P4,000.

So what exactly makes Hans Brumann silver creation different from the rest?

"There is always a thinking process when it comes to what you should come up with – like the kind of design that will please the market. You have to decide on what to bring in next, or what to offer the customers. And it's up to you to influence the market, not be influenced by it. That's what we try to do."

It looks like Hans Brumann's latest line of silver jewelry is it.

NOKIA WINNER

Nemesio Santos Jr. (center) of Parañaque City poses with Dottie Pineda, Hazel Velas, Leinard Nette Zonio and Marilou Medina of Bookware Publishing Corporation after he received his prize he won from the monthly draw of 'Nokia 8310 Raffle Promo' at the company's offices in Pasig City. For the readers of My Special Valentine (MSV) pocketbooks, the promo will last up to February 2003. For inquiries, please call 631-8893 to 94.

COSMETIDERM TO OPEN BRANCH IN ORTIGAS

Cosmetiderm LaserSurgicenter, which offers the most advanced skin care technology, is pleased to announce the opening of its newest branch in Ortigas soon. This new Surgicenter will also provide a wide range of personalized skin treatments and aesthetic services Cosmetiderm has been known for. Shown in photo are Drs. Manuel and Pie Calayan, founders and owners of Cosmetiderm, and franchisee Ms Shir Co, managing directress during the signing of contract.

PHILIPPINE AXA LIFE PARTICIPATES IN 'GIVE A LIFE'

Philippine AXA Life turned over its P150,000-donation to Philippine General Hospital's (PGH) 'Give A Life' project during the company's Christmas party last Dec. 13, held at Skyland Plaza's Atrium. The donation was a product of the company's month-long fund-raising drive among its employees and sales associates. Part of the company's Christmas party budget went to the project. In the photo are (from left) 'Give A Life's' official representatives Ludy Jarvis, Melanie Ilisan and Philippine AXA Life's president and CEO Victor P. Quisumbing.

BITS & Clips

Forum on Citizen Centric Benefits of ICT

CITIZEN Centric Benefits of ICT (Bridging the Digital Divide) Roundtable Forum will be on Friday, Feb. 14, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the World Trade Center Metro Manila in Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City. The forum will showcase best practices and initiatives in the Philippines in bridging the information gap or the digital divide. Presentations include best practices in e-learning, e-business, e-governance, e-policies, and e-legal. This forum is organized by the Philippine Communication Centrum Foundation with AIJC, Unesco, MosCom and Citem. Call Lorie (725-4227 or 727-6799) for more details.

Fairy tale love at Holiday Inn

"HEARTS Speak and Minds Meet" at the Holiday Inn Resort Clark Field, Pampanga on Feb. 14 as it features fairy tale's truest loves with its lineup of activities. The first and only Aquashow features the immortal love of Eric and Arielle from the "Little Mermaids" in an enchanting experience at the Mequeni Café's Poolside. For only P580+, tickets are inclusive of dinner buffet, show, wine toast, complimentary portrait and long-stemmed rose. Tickets are available at the restaurants and bars office. Capture this moment with a complimentary portrait from Sonny Camarillo on Feb. 13 and 14. For inquiries and reservations, call 845-1888 or (045)599-8000, or visit the Holiday Inn Resort Clark Field along Mimosa Drive, Mimosa Leisure Estate, Clark Field, Pampanga.

MAD days at DLSU-D

DE LA Salle University-Dasmarinas' Communication Arts Department will hold the annual Media Awareness Days (MAD) from Feb. 12 to 14. The three-day affair, titled "Isang Dekada Na...Pamilyang Lasalyano Tumutugon sa Hamon ng Midya at Komunikasyon", marking the AB Communication program's 10th anniversary will showcase various activities such as singing/dance/short film and newscasting competitions, film showing, photo exhibits, fashion exposure and a showcase of talents. A series of seminars in different fields of communication will likewise be part of the celebration.

SM Bacoor 3-day sale

THE GRAND 3-day sale event at SM City Bacoor is slated for February 14, 15 and 16. The much-awaited annual sale event offers up to 50 percent savings on great selections mallwide. Supermallers in Bacoor and neighboring communities who are on the lookout for choice buys and great deals on groceries, apparel, toys, infant essentials, home furnishings and many more will definitely go wild over the terrific discounts and special values offered by the mall's participating tenants. Mall hours are from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

CATHAY PACIFIC SPONSORS GOLF EVENT

For the 2nd consecutive year, Cathay Pacific Airways is the official airline of the annual Jaguar Golf Invitational to be held this year on March 17 to 21 at The Country Club. More than two hundred Jaguar owners and guests are expected to participate in this five-day event where the champions are flown by Cathay Pacific to the U.K. to represent Jaguar Philippines in the Jaguar World Golf Final held at the famous Gleneagles golf course in Scotland. Shown in photo: Wellington Soong (right), chair and president of Jaguar Philippines, and Adrian Harley, country manager of Cathay Pacific Airways. Beside them is the Jaguar Invitational perpetual trophy and a replica / model of a Cathay carrier.

Tegula tiles: Tested durability and timeless beauty

IN A COUNTRY where the weather can be as varied as a jar of jellybeans, nothing can make you and your family feel protected lest you know that you are all under one roof – a roof made with Tegula Filipina concrete roof tiles.

Tegula Filipina concrete roof tiles adhere to the highest quality standards. They are made from first-class indigenous raw materials through a process of strict and rigid quality-controlled stages. Tegula tiles' egg-shaped advantage facilitates the continuous flow of water even during heavy rains and is the only concrete roof tile with the highest flexural load rating (breaking point) in its class. Underneath each Tegula tile are unique water stoppers that prevent back-flow of wind-driven water. Tegula tiles are tough enough to withstand typhoons, earthquakes, volcanic ash falls and even bullets.

The interlocking system makes installation quick and easy. Tegula tiles are rust-free, noise-free, and are fireproof, processing high-heat resistance due to its immense insulating capacity. A roof made with Tegula tiles looks classy and elegant but is actually not expensive because it requires no yearly maintenance. Tegula tiles come in a choice of slurry coated monotone and two-tone colors of various shades with clear acrylic finish, teracotta red and cement gray that can be painted with any color of rubberized or elastomeric paint.

Timeless beauty and tested durability are what a home's roof should be. And these are what Tegula tiles can provide. Tegula tiles are sold nationwide and exported to various countries including Guam, Saipan and Palau.

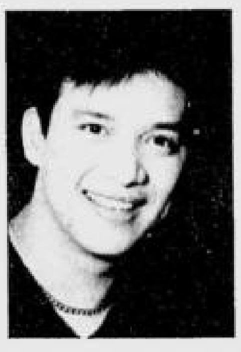
Tegula Filipina concrete roof tiles are manufactured by Vazquez Commodities Corporation, a member of the Vazquez Group of Companies, Filipino innovators in the construction and building industries and the country's leader in the prefab technology.

For more information on Tegula Filipina concrete roof tiles, contact telephone numbers 412-8290 to 94 or 362-4395, fax to 361-4611 or send email to vazcom@mydestiny.net.

P&A IS HOME TO CPA TOPNOTCHERS

Punongbayan & Araullo (P&A) the country's leading CPA firm, takes pride in its recently hired auditors when they led the 2002 national CPA licensure examinations. Photo shows P&A's topnotchers with the P&A partners who conducted an audit methology training for this new breed of highly competent auditors: (from left) audit partner Leonardo Cuaresma Jr. and Lilian Linsangan, together with Stevenson Yu (15th place), Mariam Suson (14th place), Sofronia Perez (8th place), Alvie Marie Sojor (9th place), Melvin Lopena (15th place), Alison Pangilinan (10th place), and technical training partner Dally Duque. P&A is the Philippine member firm of Grant Thornton International, one of the world's leading organizations of accounting and consulting firms.

Richard Reynoso performs on Valentine's Day



RICHARD Reynoso, the country's prince of pop music sings his heart out in a night of love songs at the De La Salle University-College of Saint Benilde International Conference Center and Hotel dubbed as "Straight From the Heart" with Marcy David Band on Valentine's Day, Feb. 14, 7 p.m.

Richard, a multi-awarded singer and actor is a mainstay of GMA-7's telebabad "Ang Iibigin ay Ikaw" topbilled by Christopher de Leon and Richard Gomez. Likewise, he is a regular performer of Armida Siguion Reyna's "Aawitan Kita" also at GMA-7. For a long time, he was also a regular host of GMA Supershow.

Richard will reminisce beautiful memories in a romantic setting, only at the International Hall with a promise of an evening teeming with love that will be burning the whole night of Valentine's Day. Dinner-dance ticket is P650.00 net for 2 with steak dinner. For further details and reservations, please call Ms Bernie Villodres of Mr Jing de Leon at telephone 303-9865 / 303-9771 to 79.

Another show for the hotel is called Pre-Valentine Special on Feb. 13, 7 p.m. at the Roof Deck. The show is a stand-up comedy that will feature top comedians and videoke masters. Ticket at P250.00 (consumable). Both Valentine shows are being presented by Philippine Daily Inquirer and Libre.

SerbisyoPinoy offers system to schools

SerbisyoPinoy is pleased to offer to all Philippine schools the AteeS (Advanced Technologies for Electronic Enrollment Systems), the only online and Internet/SMS enabled school enrollment management system.

With this system, students and parents alike can say goodbye to traffic, long lines and all the hassles that come with it because they can enroll from the comfort of their own homes, offices or even if they are enjoying their vacation abroad. They can pay their tuition fees via the Internet too!

AteeS enables schools and students to enjoy the following: online enrollment, online tuition payment using ATM or credit cards, online accounting system, online school management system and online inquiry via text.

SerbisyoPinoy Solutions Inc. is a 100-percent Filipino-owned and operated corporation. It is a total information and communications technology solutions provider. As a napplications service provider, SerbisyoPinoy offers a complete line of e-commerce and Internet-based services that can enable businesses both big and small to become competitive in the new global economy. One of its early users is the Don Honorio Ventura College of Arts & Trade (DHVCAT), a state college in Bacolor, Pampanga.

For more information about AteeS, you may call Maxiell Nadin or Sheryl Segovia at 638-9854, 687-7024 to 25 or access its website at www.serbisyopinoy.com.

People, Events & Products

Email: pr_pep@inquirer.com.ph
aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph
Aries Espinosa, Editor

Benefits of Inulin Fiber in Bibbo! Hotdogs

A LOT of people have become more and more health conscious nowadays. Some health buffs are selective with the food they eat choosing only those that have beneficial effects.

Studies show that Filipino diet is composed of at least 70 percent carbohydrates, this according to Dr. Trinidad Trinidad of the Food and Nutrition Research Institute. The typical Filipino meal consists of rice, fish and vegetables. However, people have to qualify what types of carbohydrates should be taken. The recommended dietary allowance of carbo intake is 2-25 grams.

Fiber is known to have many nutritional benefits. It has become a byword among fitness enthusiasts because it assists in the easy digestion of food, thus helping weight maintenance in the process. But there's more to fiber: it also has superior efficiency in increasing calcium absorption in the human body.

Now comes Inulin Fiber. Orafti Active Food Ingredients, a Belgian firm, recently made a research and later discovered the many benefits of Inulin Fiber, also known as Raftilose Synergy-1. Inulin Fiber is a high-grade ingredient composed of chicory inulin enriched with a specific fraction of oligofructose.

Among the local food manufacturers, CDO-Foodsphere saw the many benefits of Inulin fiber, thus leading them to incorporate Inulin fiber in its Bibbo! Hotdogs. The appeal of Bibbo! Hotdogs to kids will make it easier for them to take advantage of the nutritional benefits of Inulin fiber.

Research done by Orafti Active Food Ingredients showed that Inulin fiber increases calcium absorption. This active ingredient supports the body growth of kids by helping increase bone density and improving calcium uptake. It helps them build stronger bones for the rest of their lives.

Other nutritional benefit of Inulin fiber is it stimulates good internal function. It means that it helps build up the digestive resistance of children.Also, this active food ingredient energizes the body and the mind.

Orafti has been doing research on the nutritional benefits of plants. Each year, the company transforms more than 400,000 tons of chicory roots into inulin and oligofructose, as well as fructose syrup.

GLOBALBRANDS
Exclusive distributor of
K-SWISS

K-SWISS RENEWS TIES WITH GLOBALBRANDS

K-Swiss, makers of the original all-white leather tennis shoes, has recently renewed its ties with GlobalBrands, one of the most established fashion and sportswear distributors in the country, in a contract signing held at the K-Swiss trade show at Discovery Suites. GlobalBrands' Fashionable Good Division is the exclusive distributor of the performance tennis shoes and licensed K-Swiss apparel and accessories. Present in the contract signing are Gary Parsons, president of K-Swiss Asia-Pacific region, Christian Bernecker, investment manager, PPMV, May Carla Pastor, VP for marketing, K-Swiss, and Alex Bautista, VP for marketing, W. Brown. GlobalBrands is also the distributor of W. Brown and WBN Fashion.

PMMAP is now the Philippine Institute for Supply Management

IN ORDER to keep pace with the developments and changes of the times, the 16-year old Purchasing and Materials Management Association of the Philippines, will now be known as the Philippine Institute for Supply Management (Pism).

Over the past 10 years, Pism felt that the roles and functions of in purchasing and supply management has dramatically shifted from technical to strategic in most of Pism's member companies. However, the changing of the name had to be shelved until concrete strategic plans for the organizations have been conceptualized, discussed and agreed upon.

Pism, comprised of more than 250 member companies belonging to the top 1000 corporations in the country, continues to serve its members by creating training programs that focus on new trends, communicating with the communication with the government that gives member maximum exposure in leadership training by being part of its board of directors and working communities.

After launching the first college degree program in Purchasing and Supply Management in Asia with Pamantasan ng Makati, Pism is set to unveil two new programs early this year – the diploma in Purchasing and Supply Management with De La Salle University – College of St. Benilde and an executive management program in Supply Chain Management with the Ateneo Center for Continuing Education.

Furthermore, Pism has formed alliances with international counterparts. Through its affiliate membership with the Arizona-based Institute for Supply Management (formerly NAPM), Pism has introduced in the Philippines the Certified Purchasing Manager (CPM) and Accredited Purchasing Practitioner (APP), professional programs which are recognized all over the world.

In 2001, Pism also tied up with Geneva, Switzerland-based International Trade Centre (ITC) to deliver new seminars based on its Modular Learning System for International Purchasing and Supply Management. Pism is also a member of the Hungary-based International Federation of Purchasing and Materials Management (IFPMM).

Pism, a non-profit organization, conducts general membership meetings and industry group fora every quarter of the year. Pism has helped increase the Filipino's awareness about the importance and contribution of the profession not only to the private industry but to the government and academic sectors as well.

On Feb. 26 to 28, Pism will be holding its annual conference and exhibit at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel. The major event will be attended by professional in supply management, service and product providers and guests from local, regional and American companies. For further details, please call telephone nos. 634-6632 and 634-5942.

NORTHWESTERN ALUMNI CELEBRATE TOP RANKING

MBA graduates of Northwestern University in the Philippines hold up copies of Business Week which rated the Kellogg School of Business as the best B-School in the United States during a recent meeting at the Manila Golf Club. Shown, from left, are Cesar Purisima, Evelyn R. Singson, David Valdes, Robert Macasaet, Jose Poe III, club president, Melchor Guerrero, Kristen S. Quintos, Dennis Valdes, and Cezar Yatco.

HIV/AIDS AWARENESS

Dr. Dominic Garcia pins a red ribbon on a child during the World AIDS Day commemoration. The red ribbon is the internationally accepted symbol of AIDS awareness, solidarity and support. World AIDS Day started with a health forum on the stigma and discrimination experienced by people with HIV infection and AIDS. The celebration also featured a photo essay exhibit, entertainment numbers, story telling for children and an AIDS quiz. The highlight of the event was the 4th AIDS Media Awards given out by the AIDS Society of the Philippines in partnership with the Ford Foundation and the Philippine Information Agency. The Media Awards, which started in 1998, aims to develop AIDS advocates in the media and recognizes their efforts in promoting HIV/AIDS awareness.

BITS 'n Clips

Haribon participates in exhibits

HARIBON Foundation will participate in the Asean-Japan Exchange Year 2003 exhibits scheduled from Feb. 11 to 21 at the Department of Foreign of Foreign Affairs, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City. Haribon presents a biodiversity exhibit, and launches the book "Threatened Birds of Asia", edited by Nigel J. Collar of BirdLife International and Aldrin Mallari and Blas Tabaranza Jr. of Haribon as Philippine contributors. The exhibit will feature a video presentation on the Philippine Eagle, digital stations featuring birds, rainforests, and a game on endangered species. Haribon hopes to increase the public's awareness on the Philippines' high biodiversity profile. The exhibit is open to the public from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Mondays to Fridays. For more details, call the Haribon Foundation at 920-7430, 436-4363, 434-8237, or log on to www.haribon.org.ph.

Pahimis 2003 coffee festival

PAHIMIS 2003, a unique coffee festival of the town of Amadeo in Cavite from Feb. 14 to 16 is the subject of an on-the-spot photo contest. The photo tilt, organized by the Federation of Philippine Photographers Foundation, is open to all photographers, amateur or professional. There will be 10 photo contest winners everyday, and each receives P1,500. The grand prize winner will be selected from the 30 finalists. Photographers can take shots of the events, games, shows, participants, spectators, festival decors, costumes related to the celebration, scenes, and festivities. A series of events are lined up for each day of the festival. For details, visit FPPF at the 7th floor of the Comfoods Building, Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue corner Chino Roces Avenue, Makati City, or call 843-5341 or 813-7420 and look for Beverly Estrosas.

Thrill at Dino Expo

EVER wonder how it's like to be around dinosaurs? Live the thrill of this extinct, yet still well-loved reptiles, at the first ever "Dino Expo." Considered as the first of its kind educational entertainment event, "Dino Expo" is a traveling theme park, which was also exhibited in Japan and Korea.

Future Resource Inc. (FRI) brings to the Philippines 22 life-like, animatronics robotic dinosaurs built in the images of Tyrannosaurus Rex, Stegosaurus, Triceratops, Pteranodon, and Brontosaurus.

"Dino Expo" opened last month at the Ever Gotesco Mall, 2nd floor Cinemas 1, 2, and 4, Commonwealth Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City. It will run until March before moving to Cebu and Davao. The "prehistoric" theme park is open daily from 10 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Aside from the exhibit, "Dino Expo" will also feature a 3D cubic movie using two-colored polarization glasses.

The theme park also features a display of other scientific discoveries, sampling booths, souvenir shops and fun activities and promotional events.

Admission tickets for adults are at P150 and for kids P130, and a separate P50 for the 3D movie. Special discounts can be arranged for group tours or field trips.

FRI is a Manila-based company that engages in theme park and convention exhibition construction. "Dino Expo" is their flagship project.

For more details call up 687-4650, 687-2940 to 41, Fax No. 687-4648.

BENTO BUDGET BUSTERS AT KITARO

Enjoy real value and real taste with Kitaro's latest offerings, the Bento Budget Busters, available at the National Consumer's Council awardee's 16 branches in Metro Manila and Pampanga. Shown are Kitaro staff displaying their newest products Sakana Furai, Tonkatsu, Mixed Tempura and Yakiniku.

Improve your career with EDA seminars

A SPECIAL seminar on Customer Intimacy is offered in the Executive Development Academy (EDA) to help your sales or career growth by adding greater value to your products or services. The seminar is scheduled on Feb. 15, Saturday, from 1to 5 p.m. The ability to communicate is necessary for success. This ability to communicate involves a twin (mirror) skill: an ability to listen, read, understand and take into account the views of other people. Learn a lot more at the Effective Oral Communication seminar from Feb. 17 to 28, Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 6 to 8 p.m. To hone skills in executing, a special learning session on Planning, Directing and Controlling Skills for managers and supervisors will be conducted on Feb. 15, 1 to 5 p.m. For more information, call EDA at 523-6465, fax 526-4789.

STI
INSULAR INVESTMENT & TRUST CORPORATION

IITC IS STI RETIREMENT PLAN TRUSTEE

Insular Investment and Trust Corp. (IITC) was recently appointed trustee of Systems Technology Institute's retirement plan. Present during the signing of the trust agreement are (from left) IITC assistant vice president and trust officer Rosalinda A. Vergara, STI senior vice president for finance and administration Jeanette B. Fabul, IITC president Ronnie B. Alcantara, and STI senior vice president for subsidiary operations Antonio N. Echevarria Jr.

For sreening times, call 729-7777.
Schedules are subject to change
without prior notice.

AYALA CINEMAS NOW SHOWING

G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB1 GREENBELT 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1 CATCH ME IF YOU CAN	1 TWO WEEKS NOTICE	1 OFF KEY (EXCLUSIVE) 12:00, 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00	1 HERO 12:00, 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00, 11:15	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
2 I SPY	2 THE EYE	2 TWO WEEKS NOTICE 11:20, 1:35, 3:50, 6:05, 8:20	TWO WEEKS NOTICE 12:00, 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00, 11:15	2 HERO
3 HERO	3 HERO 11:15, 1:30, 3:45, 6:00, 8:15, 10:30	OGIE ALCASID: OA SA PUSO Feb. 13, 14 & 15	3 I SPY 12:45, 2:55, 5:05, 7:15, 9:25, 11:30	3 I SPY
4 TWO WEEKS NOTICE	4 THE HOT CHICK		4 CATCH ME IF YOU CAN 12:00, 2:45, 5:30, 8:15, 11:00	4 RING (ORIG JAPANESE VERSION)
	5 I SPY		5 THE EYE 12:45, 2:55, 5:05, 7:15, 9:25, 12:30	5 CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
	6 LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS			
	7 CATCH ME IF YOU CAN			

Reserve your seats by texting "SURESEATS G4 (or any Ayala Cinemas) and send to 2333.
Or log on to www.sureseats.com

*GSC: Guaranteed Seats Cinema

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION
MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING
EMAIL: mmta@asia.com

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DOLBY)	HERO
2 (SDDS)	THE EYE
3 (DTS)	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
4 GOLD (DTS/SDDS)	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
5 GOLD (DOLBY EX)	THE RING
6 GOLD (SDDS)	I SPY
7 GOLD (DOLBY EX)	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
8	SUKDULAN
9	BELOW
10	HOT CHICK

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	
2	
3 (DTS)	
4	FEMME FATALE
5	
6 (DTS)	
Golden Pearl THX	

Masagana CINEMA V ①②&③
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1	SUKDULAN
2	I SPY
3	BALAT SIBUYAS

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1	I SPY
2	BELOW
3	BALAT SIBUYAS
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX)	HERO
5	SUKDULAN

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285

1	BELOW
2	BALAT SIBUYAS
3	HERO
4	I SPY
5	SUKDULAN
6	TWO WEEKS NOTICE

M star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas)
tel 873.5004

1	ANALYZE THAT
2	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) tel 751.2010 to13

HERO

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	THE RING
2	HULA MO HULI KO

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL INC
tel 930.9515

1	RESERVE
2	BALAT SIBUYAS
3	RESERVE

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	I SPY
2	RESERVE
3	BALAT SIBUYAS
4	RESERVE

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (SDDS)	HERO
4	BALAT SIBUYAS
5	BELOW
6	SUKDULAN
7 (DTS)	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
8 (SDDS)	I SPY
9 (DOLBY)	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	RESERVE

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 365.7928

1	BALAT SIBUYAS
2	SUKDULAN
3	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
4 (SDDS)	I SPY
5	RESERVE
6 (DOLBY)	HERO
7 (DTS)	BELOW
8	HALF PAST DEAD
9	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0082

1	BALAT SIBUYAS
2 (SDDS)	I SPY
3 (DTS)	SUKDULAN
4 (DOLBY)	HERO
5	BELOW

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	HERO
2	SUKDULAN
3 (DTS)	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
4	BALAT SIBUYAS
5 (SDDS)	I SPY

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	BALAT SIBUYAS

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	SUKDULAN

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	BALAT SIBUYAS
Lords	BALAT SIBUYAS
Jennet	

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	HERO
2	SUKDULAN
3	I SPY
4	TWO WEEKS NOTICE

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	I SPY
2	HERO
3	BALAT SEBUYAS
4	SUKDULAN
5	TWO WEEKS NOTICE

FRC Cinema
(Talaba Bacoor Cavite)

1	
2	

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	BALAT SEBUYAS
2	SUKDULAN

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT
Araneta
MALL CINEPLEX 7
tel 911.3101 loc. 821,8242,8400

1	SUKDULAN
2	THE RING
3 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	I SPY
4 (SDDS)	HERO
5 (DTS)	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
6	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
7	BELOW

FarmersPlaza CINEMAS
tel 911.3101 loc. 821,8242,8400

1	BALAT SIBUYAS
2	I SPY

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
TEL. (049) 837-0926, 534-2185

1	I SPY
2	SUKDULAN
3 (DTS)	HERO

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	SUKDULAN
2 (DTS)	I SPY
3 (DOLBY)	HERO
4	TWO WEEKS NOTICE

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	SUKDULAN
2 (DOLBY)	I SPY
3 (DTS)	HERO
4	TWO WEEKS NOTICE

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	THE RING
2	HOT CHICK
3 (DOLBY)	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
4	

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1	SPECIAL SCREENING
2	SPECIAL SCREENING
3 (DOLBY)	THE RING
4 (DTS)	SUKDULAN

Magic Star Cinema
(Tarlac City) tel (045) 611.4305

1 (DOLBY)	THE RING
2 (DTS)	SUKDULAN
3	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	AUSTIN POWER
2	BALAT SIBUYAS
3 (DTS)	SUKDULAN
4	UNFAITFUL CONCUBINE

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	HERO
2	I SPY
3 (DTS)	SUKDULAN
4	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
5	KERIDA

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	HERO
2	SUKDULAN
3	TWO WEEKS NOTICE

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558

1	HERO
2	I SPY
3	TWO WEEKS NOTICE

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1	THE RING
2	SUKDULAN
3 (DTS)	HOT CHICK
4 (DOLBY)	EIGHT MILE

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	RESERVE
2 (DTS)	RESERVE

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	LORD OF THE RING
2	SUKDULAN
3	THE RING

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	SUKDULAN
2	THE RING
3	LORD OF THE RING
4	ANLYZE THAT

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045)887-5001 TO 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	I SPY
2	SUKDULAN
3 (DTS/SDDS)	TRY SEVENTEEN
4	MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING

Cine Nepo Mall
(Angeles City) te (045) 887-0121

1	TRY SEVENTEEN
2	REPLIKATE
3 (DOLBY)	I SPY
4 (DTS)	ONE HOUR PHOTO

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY dts SDDS

FESTIVAL SUPERMALL
Level 4
Festival Supermall
Filinvest - Alabang
Tel. 85035-71 to 72

sandra BULLOCK
hugh GRANT

Over. Done. Finished.

Two Weeks Notice

A comedy about love at last glance.

NOW SHOWING

SM CINEMA
SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 833-9999
NOW SHOWING

SM CITY BACOOR
4173808

1	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
2	SUKDULAN
3	HERO
4	BELOW
5	I SPY
6	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
7	BALAT SIBUYAS
8	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN

SM CENTERPOINT
7149522 -7181416

1	I SPY
2	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
3	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
4	BALAT SIBUYAS
5	HERO
6	HOT CHICK
7	RING (JAPANESE)
8	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
9	SUKDULAN
10	BELOW

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1	TRY SEVENTEEN
2	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
3	HALF PAST DEAD
4	I SPY
5	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
6	SUKDULAN
7	HERO
8	BELOW
9	BALAT SIBUYAS
10	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
11	HOT CHICK
12	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)

SM CITY MANILA
5238240

1	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
2	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
3	HOT CHICK
4	HERO
5	I SPY
6	HERO
7	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
8	RING (JAPANESE)
9	THE EYE
10	THE EYE
11	BELOW
12	SUKDULAN

SM MEGAMALL
6331801 • 6329401

1	HERO
2	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
3	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
4	HERO
5	THE EYE
6	I SPY
7	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
8	BELOW
9	SUKDULAN
10	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
11	HOT CHICK
12	TWO WEEKS NOTICE

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9295452

1	BELOW
2	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
3	HOT CHICK
4	SUKDULAN
5	THE EYE
6	HERO
7	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
8	I SPY

SM SOUTHMALL
8068888

1	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
2	BELOW
3	HERO
4	I SPY
5	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
6	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
7	SUKDULAN
8	THE EYE
9	RING (JAPANESE)
10	BALAT SIBUYAS

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

1	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
2	HOT CHICK
3	TRY SEVENTEEN
4	ONE HOUR PHOTO
5	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
6	SUKDULAN
7	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
8	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1	SUKDULAN
2	CLOSED
3	HOT CHICK
4	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
5	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
6	ANALYZE THAT
7	CLOSED
8	BANGKERO

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1	I SPY
2	ONE HOUR PHOTO
3	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
4	BANGKERO
5	TRY SEVENTEEN
6	SUKDULAN

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294975

1	SUKDULAN
2	I SPY
3	HERO
4	TWO WEEKS NOTICE

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1	I SPY
2	SUKDULAN
3	HERO
4	BALAT SIBUYAS

SM CITY DAVAO
2976998

1	TRY SEVENTEEN
2	HEAVEN
3	VAMPS
4	HOT CHICK
5	ANALYZE THAT
6	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN

SM BICUTAN
776-3055

1	HERO
2	SUKDULAN
3	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
4	I SPY

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
859-2884

1	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
2	MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING
3	HOT CHICK
4	8 MILE

THE PODIUM CINEMA
18 ADB Avenue Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City
633-6976

1	HERO 11:15 MF/11:45 /2:00/4:15/6:30/8:45/ 10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:45 END
2	TWO WEEKS NOTICE 11:15 MF/11:45 /2:00/4:15/6:30/8:45/ 10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:45 END

LATE NIGHT SCREENING DURING FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS
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Regular Rate : P120.00 • After 5pm • Saturday • Sunday • Holidays (Reserved Seating)

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MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS
@ Robinsons Malls
call-a-movie: 536- 7812
NOW SHOWING

Galleria 632- 9115- 16 633- 7641 loc. 279

THX	HERO
2	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
3	HERO
4	BELOW
5	I SPY
6	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
7	LORD OF THE RINGS
8	THE EYE
9	HOT CHICK
10	SUKDULAN

MATINEE PRICE: P90 THX cinema / P75 1level cinemas
Mon.- Fri. / 10am- 4pm (EXCEPT HOLIDAYS)

Ermita 536 -7809- 12

1	HERO
2	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
3	BELOW
4	THE EYE
5	SUKDULAN
6	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
7	I SPY

Metro East - Marcos hway 682- 8193 / 8280

1	THE RING (US VERSION)
2	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
3	LORD OF THE RINGS
4	I SPY
5	HERO
6	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
7	BELOW
8	SUKDULAN

Novaliches 935- 3229 - 30

1	HERO
2	RING (JAPANESE VERSION)
3	I SPY
4	SUKDULAN
5	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
6	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
7	BELOW
8	HOT CHICK

Malabon Citisquare 288-0985 / 288-2575

1	HERO
2	SUKDULAN
3	I SPY
4	TWO WEEKS NOTICE

Star Mills- Sn. Fernando, Pamp. 875- 1927 961- 5318 / 5270

1	ONE HOUR PHOTO
2	SUKDULAN
3	TRY SEVENTEEN
4	I SPY
5	BANGKERO
6	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN

Imus 471- 8188 / 875- 3838

1	HERO
2	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
3	I SPY
4	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
5	SUKDULAN
6	BALAT SIBUYAS

Sta. Rosa Laguna 049-8370907

1	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
2	HERO
3	I SPY
4	SUKDULAN
5	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN

Bacolod 441- 0453 / 0459

1	LORD OF THE RINGS II
2	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
3	HOT CHICK
4	ANALYZE THAT
5	SUKDULAN
6	BANGKERO

Iloilo 336- 8077 - 78

1	LORD OF THE RING II
2	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
3	HOT CHICK
4	ANALYZE THAT
5	SUKDULAN
6	BANGKERO

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

Jolina deserves a shot at the Big Dome

From page A28

"Others may think Araneta is too big a venue for me," says Jolina, who joined show business when she was only 11 as one of the regular talents of "Ang TV," with Roselle Nava, Angelu de Leon, Victor Neri, Gio Alvarez and Rica Peralejo.

"But I think that anyone who works as hard as I do deserves a shot at it," Jolina adds.

After almost 13 years of being in show business, Jolina admits she has learned many valuable lessons.

"One of which is to keep my cards to myself," she says. "I'm now more careful about trusting people."

Jolina has always been known for her wacky and colorful characters in movies. But now that she is 24, Jolina feels it is time to gradually change her image by taking on young-adult roles.

This year, Jolina is set to star in films opposite two of the greatest icons in local cinema—superstar Nora Aunor and action king Fernando Poe Jr.

The singer-actress said she is excited about the forthcoming team-up with Nora, who is her idol. Jolina will play Nora's daughter in "Anak ni Annie Batumbakal" under Viva Films. Filming of the movie will start as soon as Nora wraps up taping for her ABS-CBN tele-series, "Bituin."

Jolina also happily discloses that it was FPJ himself who called up her dad, Jun Magdangal, to discuss the movie that the action star plans to do with her.

"That is really something," Jolina says. "I'm so flattered that FPJ is interested in doing a movie with me."

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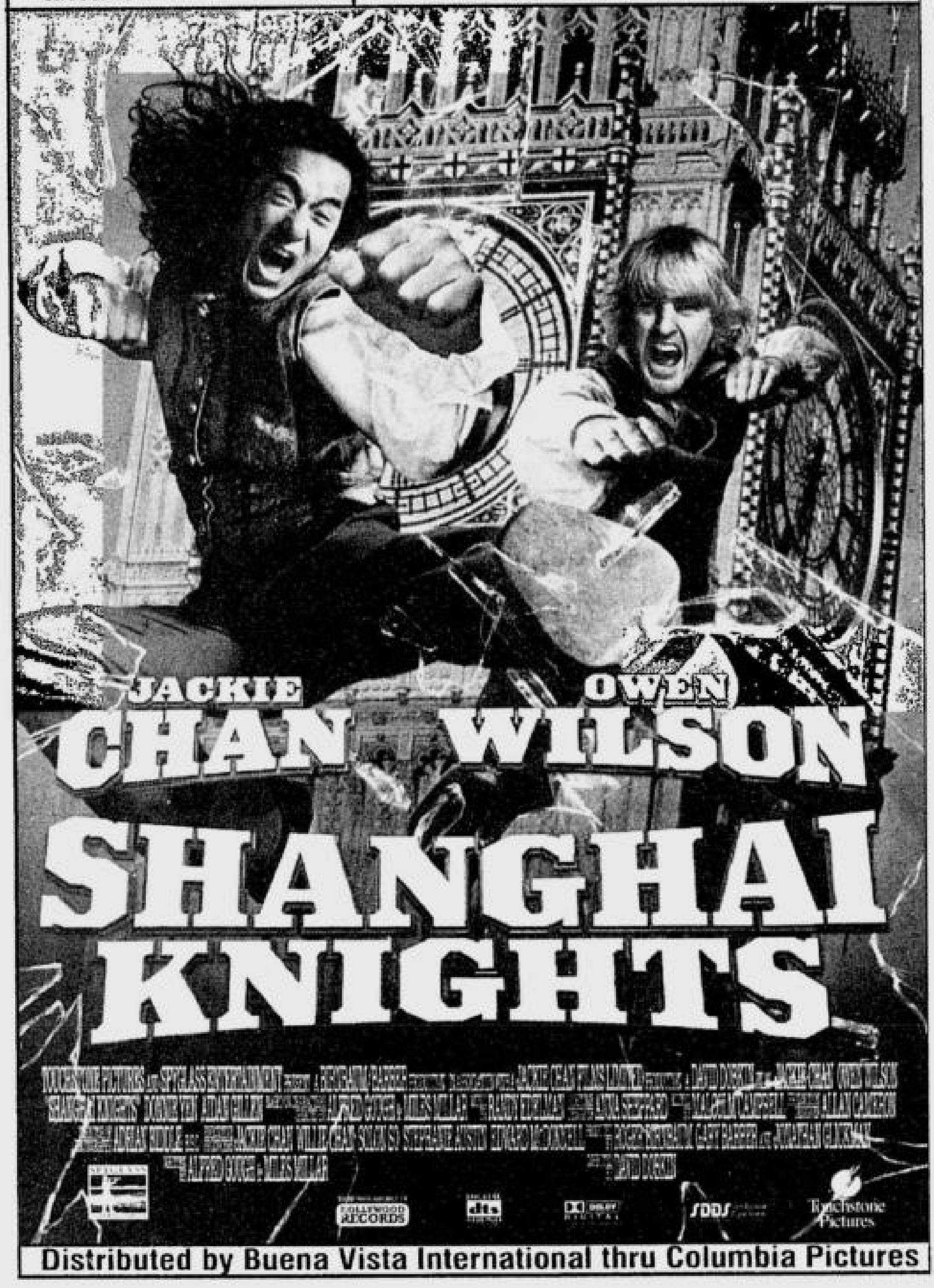
ALL AGES ADMITTED



Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED
Parents are strongly warned against bringing children below 13. Some scenes can offend them.
MAGNA CUM-MEDYA!
PELIKULANG MALAPIT SA PUSO. AT MALAYO SA UTAK.

BA
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SAL
TAE
AB noRMaL College
ToDO Na 'yAn! kULaNG Pa 'Yun!
Introducing Jenny Rosendahl
B.A. sa kalokohan, Masters sa katatawanan!
PATRICIA Javier
MIKEY arroyo
ANDREW E.
OGIE alcasid
RUFA MAE quinto
Directed by Al Tantay
VIVA

OPENS TOMORROW!

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OPENS TOMORROW
Handog ng Violett Films para sa bawat PAMILYANG Pilipino
Pelikulang Punong Puno ng Puso PARA SA LAHAT!

Pelikula ni Maryo J. de los Reyes, dgpi.
★ Truly a magnificent film. Bravo, Magnifico! - *Butch Francisco, The Philippine Star*
★ The First really good movie of 2003! - *Lito B. Zulueta, Philippine Daily Inquirer*
★ "Magnifico is Magnificent" - *Mario Hernando, Malaya*
★ "Pang-Oscar ang kalidad ng Magnifico" - *Archie de Calma, Imbestigador*
★ "Would that we all support this movie with lots of heart and the strength of its quite and hopeful honesty" - *Rina Jimenez-David, Philippine Daily Inquirer*
★ The whole thing is very Pinoy and is a particularly welcome intrusion in our times when people are despairing in this country. - *Conrado de Quiros, Philippine Daily Inquirer*
Violett

AYALA CINEMAS
Laugh out loud & fall in love this February at
ArtFilm Greenbelt 1
MADONNA

Imagine being shipwrecked on a beautiful island
- with someone you really can't stand.
Madonna & Adriano Giannini
Bruce Greenwood, Jeanne Tripplehorn & David Thornton
Guy Ritchie directs wife MADONNA in this romantic comedy, where a young sailor (ADRIANO GIANNINI) is cast adrift on an island with his employer, a rich self-centered woman who is used to having her way. Cut off from society, he reverses their roles, stripping her of her pride and controlling her completely. Until, that is, she falls in love with him.
MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18 (R)
OPENS TOMORROW
COLUMBIA PICTURES
NOKIA
INQUIRER

After Japan, Boyz II Men set to conquer Manila

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

JUST like all Boyz II Men fanatics out there, I'm counting the days and my heartbeats before the red-letter day when the world's number one R & B group will hold a special one-night-only Valentine concert at The Fort Open Field, Feb. 14 at 8:30 p.m.

The band will be interviewed live on Feb. 13 over Magic 89.9 dwTM.

I was told that Boyz II Men wowed the fans in Tokyo with a three-night musical extravaganza at Budokan Hall from Feb 5-7. They also played to a jampacked house in Nagoya at Rainbow Hall and two nights in Osaka and also at the Yokohama Arena.

Since they first appeared on the music scene, the quartet has sold millions of CDs and has spent 29 weeks at the music charts with six number one hits.

Boyz II Men originally hit the music charts under the guidance of Bell Biv Devoe's **Michael Bivins.** Their sound combines the sounds of the soul from the '60s and '70s with a touch of New Jack Swing and a capella arrangements.

Boyz II Men is composed of Philadelphians **Nathan Morris, Wanya Morris, Michael McCary** and **Shawn Stockman.**

In this often unforgiving industry, the question heard most frequently by artists isn't what have you accomplished but what have you done lately.

Boyz II Men meets that challenge head on with the release of "Full Circle," the group's sixth studio album and first for its new label, Artista Records.

"It's all about the music," says Wanya. "Whether it brings out emotion, makes you dance, sing along or provokes thought, that's what's important. That's what the vibe is with us.

"One reason for the album's title is that we reunited with the people who were with us since day one. We feel like we're going back to the basics, a rebirth that recaptures the love we had at the start.

"While recording this album, we tapped into ego-free energy. In fact, the songs on 'Full Circle' capitalize on that energy, allowing us to open our hearts and dig deep to sing songs that bring out the best in us both vocally and emotionally."

One listen to the refrain on the lead single "The Color of Love," says it all about Boyz II Men's musical vibe: "If it comes from the heart, you know it's true."

Written and produced by **Babyface,** the single carries on the group's tradition of beautiful, piercing ballads.

"We went back to a lot of our signature grooves and just tried to give ourselves more character," adds Wanya. "It's one thing to be able to sing, which is a blessing. Buts it's another to show character within your vocals and give people something to not only listen to, but to feel."

And surely the whole range of feelings and entire gamut of emotions will wash over you when you catch Boyz II Men on Feb. 14 (presented by Jag Jeans, Smart Communications Inc. and New Close-Up Lemon Mint).

Tickets are almost sold-out, but you can still rush to any SM Ticketnet outlet or call 911-5555 for reservations.

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HERO **P13** 12:40,3:00,5:20, 7:40,10:00	**HOT CHICK** **P13** 7:15,9:30	**TWO WEEKS NOTICE** **P13** 12:50,3:10,5:30, 7:50,10:10

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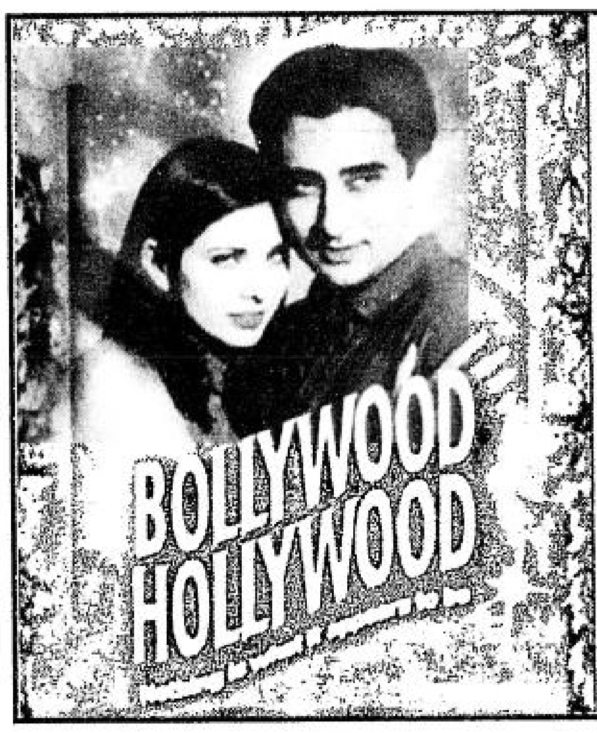

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Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7	
Ali 1	SUKDULAN
Ali 2	THE RING
Ali 3	I SPY
Ali 4	HERO
Ali 5	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
Ali 6	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
Ali 7	BELOW
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Farmers 1	BALAT SIBUYAS
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ARANETA COLISEUM	
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FEB 14	SIDE A AND FREESTYLE
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ELEPHANT WORLD	
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FEB 13	10 AM / 3 PM

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ROBEN	BALAT SIBUYAS
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY KIDS 2 MASTER DISGUISE
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ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
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A	SUKDULAN
B	BALAT SIBUYAS
C	
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CINEMA-3	THE RING
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	FEMME FATALE
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RINGS
CINEMA-6	LASTIKMAN
CINEMA-7	8 MILE
CINEMA-8	HOT CHICK
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	HERO
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CINEMA-12	SUKDULAN
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(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Louie C. Camino**

DREAM FULFILLED. Jolina Magdangal is ready for the greatest performance of her life.

Jolina deserves a shot at the Big Dome

By Marinel R. Cruz

OF ALL the special abilities she displays onscreen, singer-actress Jolina Magdangal says she finds hosting a show the most challenging, especially if one has to interview the president of the Philippines for the program.

For almost half a year now, Jolina has been the host of the long-running TV show "The Working President," which chronicles the activities of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, as well as the projects of her administration.

Jolina's presence in the show is supposed to entice young viewers to watch the program and at the same time make them interested about the president's public service activities.

When she was finally given a chance to meet the president up close and have a dialogue with the chief executive, Jolina anxiously prepared for their meeting.

Nervous wreck

"My interview with the president took only 25 minutes, but I was a nervous wreck for three days before that," recalls Jolina.

Contrary to the public's perception of the president, Jolina says Ms Macapagal is not at all mean and strict.

"Being a president is a tough job, people should understand that," Jolina says. "When it was time for us to talk, I found GMA to be very gracious and warm."

After their first meeting, Jolina proudly shares that the president would always say hello to her whenever they run into each other inside the Malacañang grounds.

"Each time GMA says 'hi,' I'd be awe-struck. I would always feel like I'm floating," Jolina says.

The 24-year-old singer-actress has another reason to feel nervous and awe-struck nowadays. She is set to perform in a major concert at the Araneta Coliseum on March 1 in a show titled "Jolina Mania."

"If meeting the president is the goal of all of her constituents, a major concert at Araneta is the dream of every performer," Jolinas says of her show to be produced by Maxi-Media International.

Intrigues

But even before Jolina and the show's musical director Butch Miraflor could formally sit down and discuss the songs that would be included in her repertoire, the show has been hounded by intrigues.

Jolina's concert will be up against a free show with ABS-CBN artists at the Araneta Center's open-air grounds.

Though Jolina refuses to comment on ABS-CBN's move, the buzz is loud that the network is mounting the free show intentionally to be pitted against hers.

"I would rather concentrate on my show than entertain such negative thoughts," Jolina asserts. "It only makes me more nervous. This show is no joke. Not all artists can do Araneta. If I allow myself to be affected, I won't be able to perform well."

Jolina, an exclusive talent of ABS-CBN for 12 years, left the network late last year to enter into a non-exclusive contract with its rival channel GMA 7. Jolina's move reportedly displeased ABS-CBN.

Request

Maxi-Media executive Jeffrey Cal, meanwhile, disclosed that they have requested ABS-CBN to move the date of its free show. "But the network said they could not grant our request," Cal says. "They said the show is part of their year-long 50th anniversary celebration."

Cal insists Maxi-Media is confident that Jolina could fill up the Big Dome, even with ABS-CBN's free show.

"We believe in Jolina's capacity to draw in the crowd," he says.

The show's stage director, Rico Mortel, adds: "The concert market has not really seen Jolina in a major show yet. This is going to be really interesting."

Jolina is aware that a number of people are wont to raise their eyebrows on her Big Dome salvo.

JOLINA/ A26

arañ

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VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

HOST: Why are you filing a case for grave threats against the accused?

Guest: What can I do? I have to protect my honor and safety! *Mabigat ang binitiwan niya na* threat *na* wording!

(*Ay, kaya naman pala!*)

***

Host: You have been charged with not properly disbursing the funds of your bureau. Your side?

Guest: It's completely untrue. As these plans show, we are soon spending the funds for building *idipis* poor *upis*!

(*Idipis* poor *upis?* Ah, edifice for office!)

***

Host: Welcome to our special show on parents and their children. To start off, tell our viewers, what should be a good relationship between parents and children?

Guest: Parents should be the ones to work hard for their *kidses* future!

(*Ay, kidses!*)

***

Host: You look happy tonight.

Guest: I am! I just saw my star!

Host: So, you're very happy?

Guest: Of course, finally, *di ba naman, nakita ko ang* idol *ko* as a person!

(Uh, how did you see him before tonight?)

***

Host: What about you, what can you say about the right relationship between parents and their children?

Guest: We should give importance to all—*hindi lang sa mga bata, pati sa mga magugulang!*

(*Ay, magugulang!*)

***

Host: *Papano kayo nakapunta dito* from abroad to represent the Filipino community *sa lugar ninyo?*

Guest: I'm sorry, no Tagalog. I was born there.

Host: So, only English?

Guest: Yes, I speak well only English, that's the all!

(*Ay*, that's the all!)

***

Host: Do you deny the charge of acts of lasciviousness filed against you?

Guest: Yes, I deny! I could not have done it. If I did, she would have cried out, but she didn't. *Di ba,* instinct *ng babae, kung ang lalaki ay may* advancement *sa kanya,* instinct *ng babae ang magsigaw o sipain siya?* But she didn't!

(*Ay, may* advancement!)

***

Host: How close were you with your former boyfriend?

Guest: We were very close. We were so close, we were like one, as a unit!

(Ah, so!)

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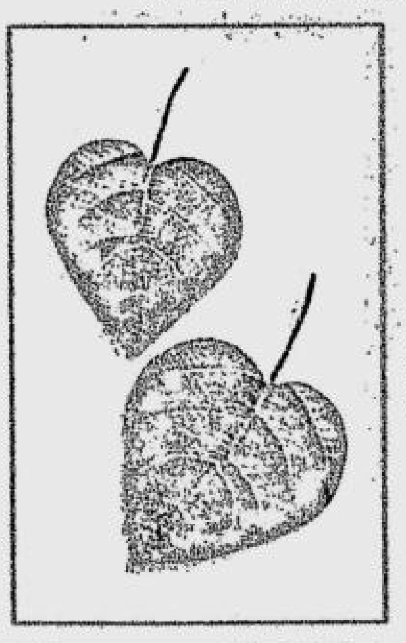

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BIR probes forex traders; peso recovers

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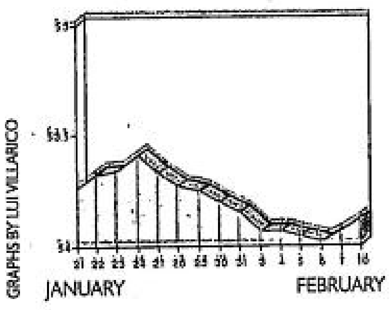

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

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As of 5 p.m., Feb. 10, 2003

GOLD: $371.35-371.75

per ounce Hong Kong, Feb.10, 2003

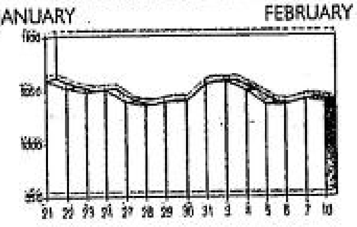
STOCK MARKET

Stocks end lower on peso, Iraq concerns

STOCKS dropped slightly yesterday as investors awaited for stronger corporate leads while worries over the weak peso and a possible war in Iraq depressed sentiment.

The Philippine main index fell 2.94 points or 0.28 percent at 1,038.89 points.

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Value turnover slipped 25 percent to P147 million from Friday's P195.5 million.

There were 48 stocks unchanged as decliners edged out gainers 13 to 12.

"Investors remained sidelined as concerns mounted over the possibility of war in Iraq. Also putting pressure on the market is the peso's current weakness," said BPI Securities investment analyst Spencer Yap.

The peso fell to its lowest in 18 months on Friday on concerns that a war in the Middle East, where approximately 16 percent of total overseas Filipino work, might squeeze dollar inflows.

Analysts said market participants were also waiting for full-year results of major blue chips, to be released this week.

"The release of full-year results by several major index issues may spark some interest but the general market should continue to consolidate," Yap said.

Reuters

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance has directed the Bureau of Internal Revenue to ensure that banks and money-changing companies have been paying the correct taxes from any windfall in their dollar-trading operations.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said that if currency traders were to realize huge margins from betting against the peso, the least the government must do was to tax them appropriately.

Last Friday, the government vowed to come down hard on currency speculators when the peso fell to a day low of 54.10 to $1 although it closed at 53.93. The warning appeared to have been heeded well.

Yesterday, the peso traded a shade below 54 to a dollar and closed at 53.88.

The local currency had been volatile due to dollar-buying pressures caused by the US-Iraq war jitters.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reminded banks and money-changing companies last Friday that regulation ordering a full documentation of any trade and non-trade currency transaction exceeding $5,000 were still in effect.

BIR Commissioner Guillermo Parayno said he had asked BSP Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes to provide him with a complete list of banks and non-banks engaging in foreign exchange transactions so the bureau could start looking into their tax payments.

"We have to help dampen the speculative attacks on the peso by looking into their profits. If they realize a windfall from speculating, then we shall tax them accordingly," the BIR chief said.

The government had been using fiscal measures to help ease the pressure on the peso. In August 2001, Camacho also asked the BIR to investigate foreign exchange traders for possible speculation.

Back then, the government probed 27 banks and money-changing companies as well as 14 large clients.

Aside from selling more dollar-linked bonds to the market, Camacho also used his own version of "moral suasion" to dissuade banks not to bet against the peso.

The finance chief said the government had been monitoring even the offshore peso transactions of the foreign banks to ensure that these were not using the forward market abroad to speculate against the local currency.

"We will look unkindly to foreign financial institutions who will be found adding to the pressure on the peso. We would consider these violations when choosing underwriters for our borrowings. We are monitoring the movements not only here but also their offshore transactions," the finance chief said.

Vehicle sales surged 26% in January

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE AUTOMOTIVE industry opened the year with a bang as it posted a 26-percent growth in sales in January, according to the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc.

Except for Toyota Motor Philippines Corp., which tightened its grip on pole position, there was plenty of movement in the industry sales ranking last month with Honda Cars Philippines Inc. racing up a notch while Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corp. fell down two places.

Campi reported that vehicle sales hit 6,960 units in January from 5,508 units during the same period last year.

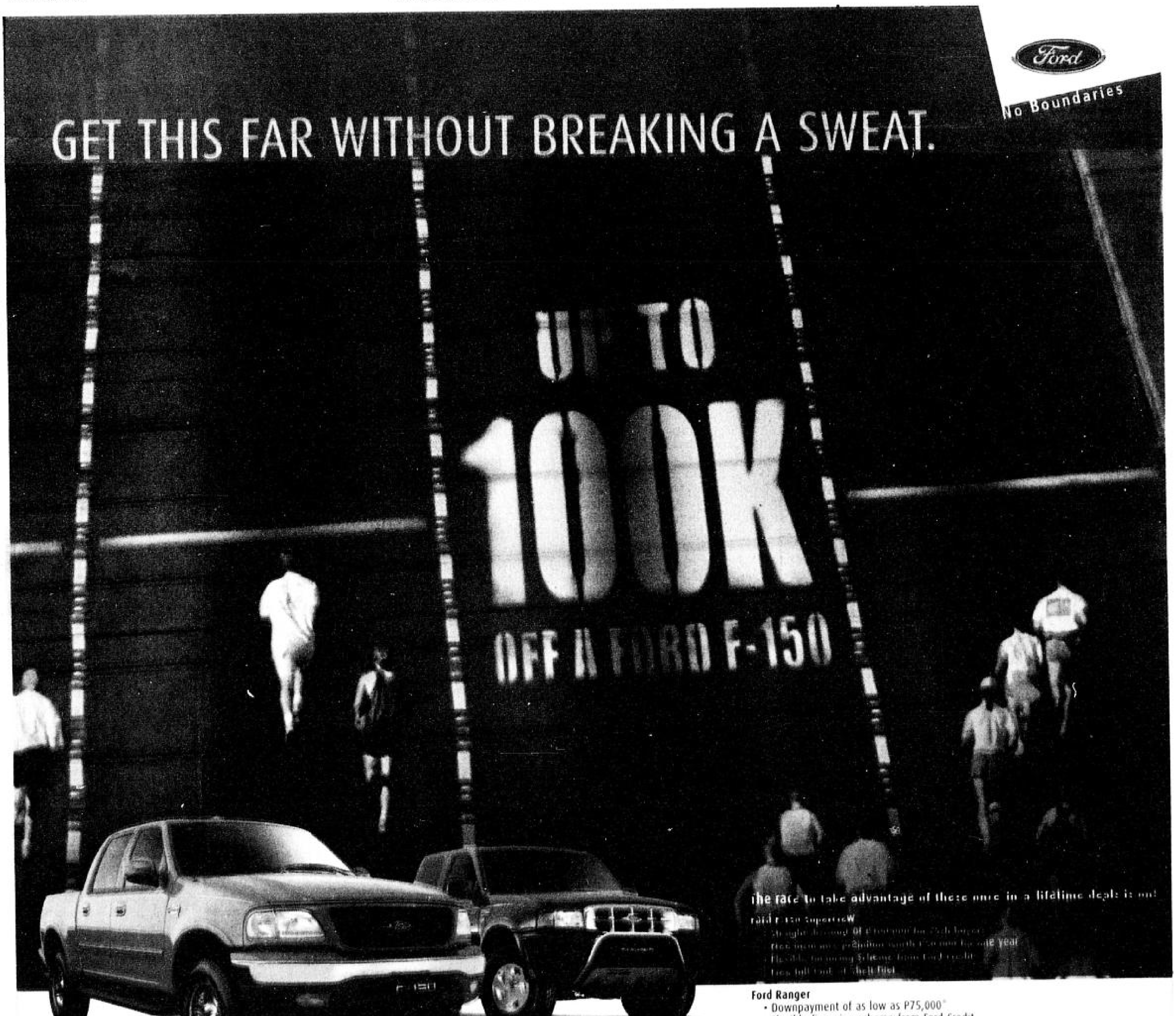
But Elizabeth Lee, senior vice president of Universal Motors Corp., was not impressed by the sales surge considering that sales were coming off a low base in the first quarter last year when consumer demand was dampened by the 9-11 attacks in the United States. January sales were down 11 percent from the December turnover of 7,815 units.

Commercial vehicles, which accounted for 73 percent of total industry sales, jumped 42.4 percent in January this year from 3,585 units during the same period last year. Passenger cars dropped 3.6 percent to 1,854 units in January this year from 1,923 units during the same period last year.

Toyota was number one with a 28.8-percent share of the market or 2,007 units sold in January.

Last year's number two, Mitsubishi, slumped to number four with only 1,033 units sold or 14.8-percent share. The company had been phasing out its old Lancer in line with the launch of its all-new Lancer (to be imported as completely built up units from Thailand) late last month.

Honda rallied to number two with a 20.9-percent share or 1,455 units sold largely on the back of strong demand for the Honda CR-V, its entry in the Asian utility vehicle segment.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Dirty hair

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

FORMER San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada, who is facing charges of plunder, is asking the Sandiganbayan for a speedy hearing on his petition for bail.

Jinggoy's lawyer, Prospero Crisini, argues that, under the plunder case filed by this cute administration, Jinggoy was accused of getting P2 million in jueteng money.

But Crisini says that the plunder law is clear and specific on the amount. And that is, at least P50 million.

Thus, Jinggoy only has a small role, as alleged in the plunder case of his father, who is more popularly known in this column as the man named Band...Wrist Band.

As such, Crisini says it does not justify the imposition of the capital punishment, which is only life imprisonment or death.

In other words, Jinggoy is entitled to every citizen's right to bail.

* * *

NOW the question is, why is Jinggoy still in jail, in the first place? It's simple. It's because his petition for bail is taking forever.

And to think, all the other alleged cronies of Wrist Band who were said to have amassed billions upon billions, are enjoying life as "honorable" members of society.

True, Mark Jimenez is also in jail in the United States, and so is Atong Ang. But the others are still living it up.

Of course you heard of those vicious rumors about how much money, in dollars, changed hands to get themselves off the hook.

* * *

WORD also goes around that a bigtime somebody is behind the move in Congress to derail the new bill which seeks to amend the anti-money laundering law.

How come even certain officers of the Bangko Sentral are not even surprised about such a lobby? Because they already saw it in the first bill.

In the original law, the bone of contention was the threshold. Mr Bigtime was against a low threshold.

This time around, the bone of contention is also the threshold. Mr. Bigtime must be all over the place again.

The threshold is the amount of deposit which makes an inquiry into the source automatic. It's like an alarm which you set in the house for the arrival of the in-laws.

The involvement of Mr. Bigtime is hard to explain. He never interfered in Congress business before. He is a busy man. He has a small commercial bank to run.

* * *

NOBODY can say if he is using the bank for washing dirty money. Maybe our lawmakers are still enjoying the useless debate on this particular piece of legislation.

But we have wasted too much time, money, and putrid saliva in the lengthy debate over the law. Please, stop it, okay!

In the first place, if we did the law right the first time, which was only about a year and a half ago, we do not have to do it all over again today.

Maybe it's not too much to ask of Congress to do it right this time. Or else we will have to do it all over again in no time.

* * *

THIS country, you see, is under pressure from the FATF, which does not have anything to do with diet food, despite the word "fat" in it. The last "f" does not stand for "free."

Anyway, it is the so-called Financial Action Task Force, which is based in Paris. It tries to look out for criminals in suits who wash their dirty money in banks.

The FATF is the international body which forces countries like the Philippines to adopt certain banking rules against money laundering.

In the view of some bankers here, the FATF is the Dirty Harry in international finance. We should not really try our darn best to make its day.

* * *

WELL, the FATF gave us a deadline to amend the law, which happens to be tomorrow. Our failure to meet it will mean sanctions.

Of course the senators and the congressmen will not suffer at all. Only the families of those 8 million or so OFWs will bear all brunt of the foolishness in Congress.

Because of the sanctions, when the OFWs remit money, foreign banks can charge them $40 per transaction, which is a big improvement from the present $2.

That's why a lot of OFW groups are on a warpath against the lawmakers. I'm sure that, with the absentee voting bill, they cannot wait to express all their fury in 2004.

* * *

AS many as 11 senators voted to have the so-called threshold amount at P2 million, as against the FATF's figure of P500,000.

Sure, the P2 million is already lower than the present threshold, but it still does not meet the FATF standard.

How many of us have that kind of money, anyway? Well, maybe only the senators and the congressmen.

That Mr. Bigtime, who lobbied hard on the original anti-money laundering bill, succeeded in getting a high threshold of P4 million the first time.

At such a threshold, according to the FATF, we may as well forget the law. We can still become a haven for money laundering.

That is not bad for a country of islands like ours. Such countries are famous for only two things, namely, tourist resorts and banks specializing in money laundering.

* * *

OF course our beloved lawmakers must argue a lot on the proposal to lower the threshold. One argument is, the amendment negates the secrecy of bank deposits. Hmm.

That is precisely the point. The secrecy of bank deposits should not protect criminals. For how come the threshold does not bother those who have nothing to hide?

Another argument talks about sovereignty. The FATF is said to be trampling upon our sovereignty. Blah, blah, blah.

All those are just nice ways of saying what the lawmakers actually have in mind.

And that is, they just want to serve the banks which are making a killing washing the dirty money of some scary, hairy criminals here and abroad.

* * *

EVEN Rep. Jesli Lapuz of Tarlac recognizes the need to amend the law. He wants this cute administration of Gloriaetta to plead with the FATF to grant us an extension.

Maybe my good friend and provincemate Jesli does not know that the FATF has already given us an extension. It has been pestering us for almost two years now.

Of course it is understandable why the good congressman wants more time for debate on the amendment. Our lawmakers do have enough time.

They are using their time, and our money, amounting to billions of pesos, for such foolish things as Cha-cha and investigations.

How many bills did they pass? Well, not that many.

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3. BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	630,000	600,000
4. CALATAGAN GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	80,000	
5. CAMP JOHN HAY	280,000	220,000
6. CANLUBANG GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	500,000	
7. CAPITOL HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	120,000	100,000
8. CELEBRITY CLUB	180,000	170,000
9. COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS	350,000	340,000
10. CLUB FILIPINO	180,000	140,000
11. EASTRIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	130,000	
12. EAGLERIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	300,000	250,000
13. EVERCREST GOLF CLUB "A"	100,000	
14. FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	200,000	
15. FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	250,000	
16. FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	350,000	
17. LUISITA GOLF CLUB	350,000	
18 MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	250,000	230,000
19. MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "B"	270,000	250,000
20. MANILA GOLF CLUB (IND.)	11,000,000	10,800,000
21. MANILA GOLF CLUB (CORP)	13,000,000	
22. MANILA POLO CLUB	2,600,000	2,400,000
23. MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "A"	500,000	475,000
24. MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "B"		550,000
25 METROPOLITAN CLUB "A"	100,000	
26. METROPOLITAN CLUB "B"	150,000	100,000
27. MT. MALARAYAT GOLF CLUB (IND.)	350,000	
28. ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A" "B" "C"	Pls. call	Pls call
29 QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	220,000	200,000
30 RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	180,000	150,000
31 RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	210,000	
32. RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	300,000	300,000
33. STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB "A"	1,500,000	1,300,000
34. SUBIC BAY YACHT CLUB (IND.)	200,000	
35. TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS INT'L GOLF CLUB	850,000	800,000
36 TAGAYTAY MIDLAND	750,000	700,000
37. VALLE VERDE COUNTRY CLUB	150,000	140,000
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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Monday, February 10, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	16.75	16.75	16.5	16.5	16,400
Bank of the Phil. Islands	35	35	34.5	35	113,700
China Banking Corp.	635	635	635	635	910
Citystate Savings Bank	14.75	14.75	14.75	14.75	2,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	30	30	30	30	500
Union Bank of the Phil.	17.75	17.75	17.75	17.75	21,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	1255	1275	1255	1275	7,720
Sun Life Financial Serv.	955	955	950	955	2,620
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	13,500
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	20,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	530	530	530	530	1,220
ISM Communications Corp.	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	1,000,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	15,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.185	0.185	0.18	0.18	270,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	285	292.5	285	287.5	112,030
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	100,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	8.6	8.8	8.6	8.8	35,000
Manila Electric Co. B	12	12.25	12	12.25	3,102,000
Petron Corp.	1.68	1.7	1.68	1.7	2,846,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1	1	1	1	60,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.42	2.44	2.42	2.42	790,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	230,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	10,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	60,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	6,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	17	17.25	17	17	156,700
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	32.5	32.5	32.5	32.5	300
RFM Corp.	0.7	0.71	0.7	0.71	90,000
San Miguel Corp. A	56	56	55.5	56	61,500
San Miguel Corp. B	62	62	62	62	128,200
Universal Robina Corp.	3.05	3.05	3.05	3.05	64,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	4.3	4.35	4.3	4.3	1,481,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.3	2.32	2.3	2.32	53,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	1,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.1	2.1	2	2	25,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	4,910,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	400,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	50,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	8.8	8.8	8.7	8.7	14,000
Ionics Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	190,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	581,000
Macroasia Corp.	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	20,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.58	0.59	0.58	0.59	300,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.0825	0.0825	0.0825	0.0825	200,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.155	0.155	0.155	0.155	4,600,000
Music Corp.	0.125	0.185	0.125	0.16	4,020,000
Philtread Holdings Corp.	3	3.1	3	3.1	360,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.035	0.035	0.035	0.035	800,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.32	0.34	0.31	0.32	1,760,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	60,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68	150,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	12.75	13.25	12.75	13.25	31,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	530,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	120,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.43	100,000
Manila Jockey Club	8	8	8	8	21,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	12.25	12.5	12.25	12.5	37,500
Jollibee Warrants	16.75	16.75	16.75	16.75	47,800
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5	5	4.95	5	3,545,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	10,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	1,110,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.115	0.12	0.115	0.12	30,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.135	0.135	0.13	0.13	700,000
SM Development Corp.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	36,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	943,000
MINING					
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	1,400,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0022	0.0022	0.0022	0.0022	13,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	6,000,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	120,000

CURRENCIES

Feb. 10, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	0.923532	1.000000	54.068000
Japan	Yen	0.007679	0.008315	0.449600
United Kingdom	Pound	1.507388	1.632200	88.249800
Hongkong	Dollar	0.118415	0.128220	6.932600
Switzerland	Franc	0.681774	0.738225	39.914300
Canada	Dollar	0.607467	0.657765	35.564000
Singapore	Dollar	0.529245	0.573066	30.984500
Australia	Dollar	0.545242	0.590388	31.921100
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.449751	2.652590	143.420200
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.246282	0.266674	14.418500
Brunei	Dollar	0.527733	0.571429	30.896000
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000104	0.000113	0.006100
Thailand	Baht	0.021532	0.023315	1.260600
UAE	Dirham	0.251466	0.272287	14.722000
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.082800	58.544800
ArgentinaPeso	0.293184	0.317460	17.164400	
Brazil	REAL	0.258620	0.280034	15.140900
Denmark	Kroner	0.134488	0.145624	7.873600
India	Rupee	0.019394	0.021000	1.135400
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.243067	0.263193	14.230300
Mexico	New Peso	0.083904	0.090851	4.912100
New Zealand	Dollar	0.506267	0.548186	29.639300
Norway	Kroner	0.133478	0.144530	7.814400
Pakistan	Rupee	0.015928	0.017247	0.932500
South Africa	Rand	0.110008	0.119117	6.440400
Korea	Won	0.000780	0.000845	0.045700
Sweden	Kroner	0.109125	0.118161	6.388700
Syria	Pound	0.021989	0.023810	1.287400
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.026600	0.028802	1.557300
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000481	0.000521	0.028200

First Pacific unit OKs Boni deal with Ayala, Campos

By Doris C. Dumlao

LAROUGE B.V., a unit of Hong Kong-based First Pacific Co. Ltd., has given local property arm Metro Pacific Corp. the go-ahead to execute a $90-million deal to relinquish control of the Fort Bonifacio Global City development to an Ayala-Campos joint venture.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Ayala Land Inc. vice president and chief finance officer Jaime Ysmael said Larouge finally signed on Saturday an agreement with ALI and the Campos group—through Evergreen Holdings Inc. and Greenfield Development Corp.—to proceed with the $90-million loan takeout deal earlier forged with MPC.

Although the agreement between Larouge and the ALI-Campos group would still be subject to certain conditions, including the approval of First Pacific stockholders, it indicated the Salim-owned conglomerate's approval of the sale of a controlling stake in Fort Bonifacio developer Bonifacio Land Co.

Under the agreement, Larouge agreed to assign to the 50-50 ALI-Campos joint venture its rights and obligations to the $90-million loan owed by MPC that was secured by a 50.38-percent stake in BLC.

"The assignment agreement constitutes the formal involvement of Larouge B.V. and First Pacific Co. Ltd. in the implementation of the transfer of the controlling interest in BLC to the Evergeen/ALI consortium based on the Nov. 23, 2002 agreement," Ysmael announced.

Under the terms of the agreement, ALI and Greenfield will acquire, and MPC agreed to transfer the controlling interest in BLC to settle the principal amount of the $90-million debt owed by MPC to Larouge.

Also part of the deal was the assignment by MPC to the joint venture of an additional P655 million in receivables from BLC.

As the deal covers only the principal loan of $90 million, MPC is also seeking a restructuring of about $23 million in accrued interest owed to Larouge.

After the consummation of the deal, MPC's stake in BLC will be diluted from 72.9 percent to 22.5 percent.

Meanwhile, about P3.8 billion worth of property assets in the Global City will be transferred to MPC for repayment of advances to BLC. As such, it will be left with about 10.4 hectares known as the northern central business district in addition to the upscale Pacific Plaza Towers.

10-month BOP surplus hits $400M

THE BALANCE of payments (BoP) surplus was more than $400 million in the first 10 months of 2002, Bangko Sentral Deputy Governor Amando Tetangco said yesterday.

The government recently revised its trade and current account data for 2000 and 2001 to reflect under-reporting of imports of electronics components.

The central bank said the statistics department would not issue revised full-year imports data for 2002 until April and that balance of payments numbers for the rest of last year would be delayed until May.

In the January to September period, the Philippines posted a balance-of-payments surplus of $751 million.

Tetangco told reporters the country posted a balance-of-payments deficit of $339 million in October but was still on target to meet the central bank's projection of a $149-million surplus for 2002.

No other details were immediately available.

Reuters

Customs shuts down 91 more bonded warehouses

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BUREAU of Customs yesterday reported it had shut down an additional 91 bonded warehouses as part of the agency's ongoing campaign to plug revenue leaks and stamp out smuggling.

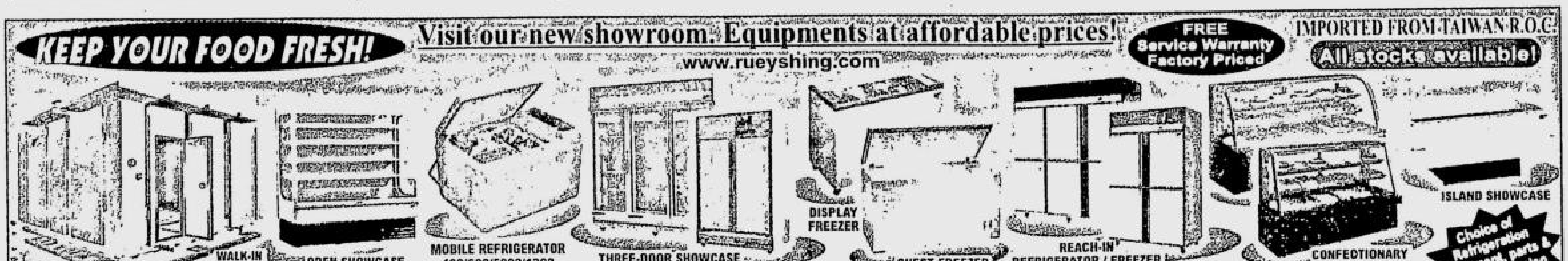
Last month, it closed 320 bonded warehouses found to be inactive for at least 12 months. Customs Commissioner Antonio Bernardo said some warehouses were used to smuggle goods and evade tariffs and taxes.

"We fully intend to rationalize the operations of bonded warehouses in the country. I have already issued an administrative order directing the shift to industry-specific bonded warehousing and the phaseout of customs bonded trading warehouses," Bernardo said.

He said the closure of the warehouses did not prevent the bureau from recovering outstanding tax liabilities that might have accrued from unliquidated entries, unexplained withdrawals and missing inventories.

"The policy shift is meant to curb smuggling and improve tax collection. From now on, customs bonded warehouses will be operated based on the specific needs of industries. In this way, we can closely monitor their operations," the Customs chief said.

A little less than 1,000 bonded warehouses operate all over the country.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Globalization environment's No. 1 threat, int'l activists say

By Dominique Monera-Tabora and Jofelle Tesorio
Southern Luzon Bureau

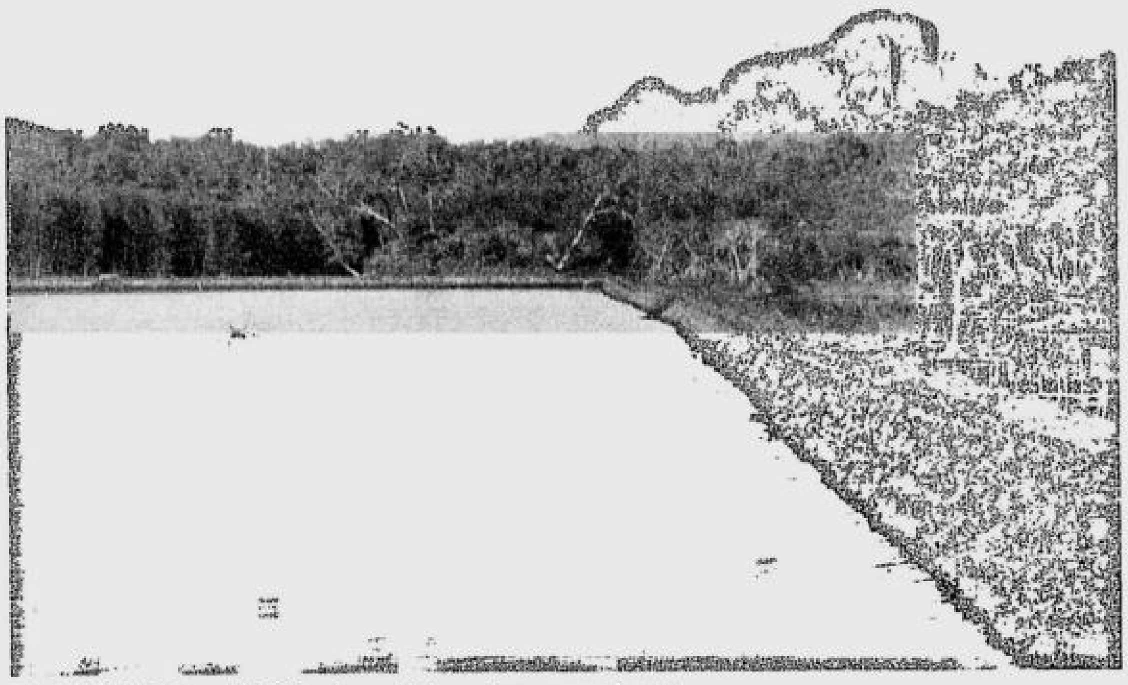
(Last of two parts)

SPECIAL REPORT

MANGROVE forests are traditionally looked upon as wasteland. That is why the real value of the services that mangroves provide is often overlooked.

Mangrove swamps provide excellent nesting and feeding areas for a variety of fish, invertebrates and birds.

A large number of fish species require mangroves for spawning, feeding or protection from predation. Birds are attracted to mangroves because of abundant food resources and sites for nesting, resting and feeding. Many breeding and migratory birds, especially the Philippine cockatoo, live in mangroves.


TAGEBINET fishpond, 300 hectares of cleared mangrove forest.

Mangroves also help control floods by storing water and slowly releasing it to downstream areas after the flood peak. They can reduce wave action and slow down the flow of water, lessening erosion and causing sediments to settle out of the water.

This improves water quality, as does the removal of nutrients and contaminants from water. Healthy mangroves promote healthy coral reefs.

Mangroves provide many opportunities for recreational activities, such as bird watching, hunting, fishing, trapping and hiking, and they provide educational opportunities for nature studies and scientific research.

Diminishing forests

In 1918, the Philippines used to have 450,000 hectares of mangrove forests. The number went down to 375,000 ha in 1950 and to 227,947 ha in 1972. In a survey done in 1996, the country's mangrove cover had shrunk to 120,500 ha.

Palawan's mangrove cover—placed at 45,872 ha by a 1998 survey conducted by the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development—accounts for more than a third of the total and contains most of old growth mangrove stands still found in the Philippines.

A high degree of species diversity—28 "true mangrove" species belonging to 11 families—can be found in the mangrove forests of Palawan.

Presidential Proclamation 2152, issued in 1981, declared the entire province of Palawan as a mangrove swamp reserve, placing it under the administration and control of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Useless laws

Despite the law, Palawan's mangrove continued to shrink until 1992. Mangrove forests converted to fishpond alone covered 2,326 ha in 1998 despite the government's ban on the renewal of licenses and leases over mangrove-covered areas.

Republic Act 7161 also prohibited the cutting of mangroves, while RA 8550—the Fisheries Code—banned the conversion of mangrove areas into fishponds.

Implementing regulations also provided that undeveloped portions of expired fishpond lease agreements will be reverted to forest lands.

Other causes of mangrove destruction are the tan bark stripping for tanning, clearing for human settlement, over-harvesting of mangrove trees for housing materials and firewood.

Extensive mangrove cutting in Barangay Tagabinet, Puerto Princesa—covered by an expired fishpond lease agreement for 301 ha—was used by the participants of the conference as a case study.

On the last day of the conference, international activists, with the active support of community leaders, more than 200 students from the State Polytechnic College of Palawan, non-government organizations, DENR personnel, barangay officials and the city government led by Puerto Princesa Mayor Edward Hagedorn tropped to Tagabinet armed with a demolition order from DENR Regional Director Jovito Layugan.

Ten kilometers of dikes covering more than 15 ha of mangrove forests were demolished on Jan. 12 and 18 to allow the free flow of water going to the mangroves.

Not isolated

According to Jake Escanos of the Tambuyog Development Center, the case of mangrove destruction in Palawan is part of the problems of other provinces in the Philippines and across the globe.

"This is an inspiration for us living in America, where the government is systematically ignoring environment laws and is antagonistic to NGOs," said Josh Farley, a professor at the Gund Institute for Ecological Economics in the University of Vermont, Maryland.

Farley is also co-author of the "Ecological Economics: Principles and Applications."

Nantana Gajaseni, a professor in Chulalungkorn University in Thailand, was impressed on how the people worked hand in hand to find solutions to the problems brought about by the conversion of mangroves into fishponds.

She added that countries should work together to fight globalization that, she said, was causing the destruction of the environment worldwide.

Shrimps

Thailand is the world's largest producer of farmed shrimps, with 70,000 ha in Thai shrimp aquaculture pond that produced 210,000 metric tons of shrimp in 1998.

The Philippines was the fifth largest producer of farmed shrimps after Ecuador, India and Indonesia in 1998.

According to Batker, Puerto Princesa was chosen as the venue of the conference because of the presence of extensive mangrove forests and the active support of the local government for the protection of the environment.

Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun wrote Hagedorn, thanking him for leading in the demolition of the fishpond dike despite the protest of members of a multi-purpose cooperative operating the fishpond in Tagabinet.

BIR retrenchment to cost ₱10.3B

EMPLOYEES of the Bureau of Internal Revenue are seeking a P10.3-billion separation plan in the event that Congress approves a law creating an independent revenue authority.

Documents show that the 12,000-strong BIR Employees Association is seeking a separation package of five months worth of salary for every year of service if Congress approves a law creating the National Authority for Revenue Administration, or Nara.

The Macapagal administration is pushing this law to check corruption in the BIR.

Annual surveys conducted the Social Weather Stations have identified the BIR as among the most corrupt public offices in the country.

The BIR union has threatened to go on strike to block the Nara law, which seeks to introduce transparency, accountability and independence in the country's biggest tax-collecting agency.

The BIR is responsible for collecting about 80 percent of the government's annual revenues, but corruption has slowed down its performance through the years, leading to a widening budget deficit.

The government said some P10.3 billion could already buy 172 million textbooks or construct 50,000 classrooms for public school children.

Clarissa S. Batino

DOF, DTI clash over auto tax rule

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance should have given auto assemblers a grace period of at least three months to comply with a new regulation restricting a tax incentive on vehicles with 10 seats or more, trade officials said yesterday.

"I know for a fact that there is a transition period of three to four months" Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II yesterday told reporters.

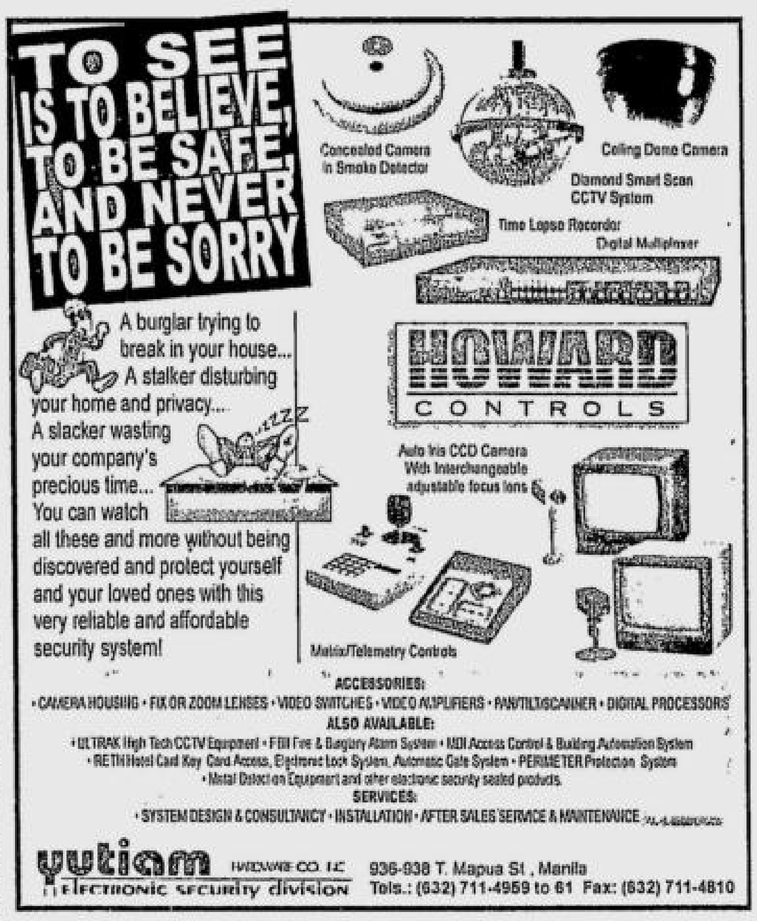
The Department of Trade and Industry was involved in drawing up Revenue Regulation 4-2003, which was drafted to check abuses of the tax exemption enjoyed by auto assemblers producing vehicles with 10 seats or more.

The trade department apparently agreed to implement RR 4-2003 thinking that Congress would pass a similar tax measure before the transition period could lapse.

The DOF and Bureau of Internal Revenue, however, chose to implement the new regulation on Feb. 17—just 15 days and it was published—and ordered all auto assemblers to start paying the appropriate taxes after they had exhausted their inventories as of the cut-off date.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho has rejected calls to defer the tax change, saying it had been on the drawing board since last year.

"I'm not too worried about the impact of the BIR order because it will be superseded once Congress enacts the bill. It will only be a problem if the draft bill faces rough sailing and is not approved by Congress," Trade Undersecretary Gregory Domingo said.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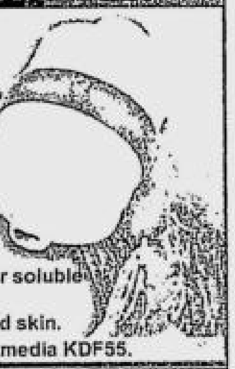
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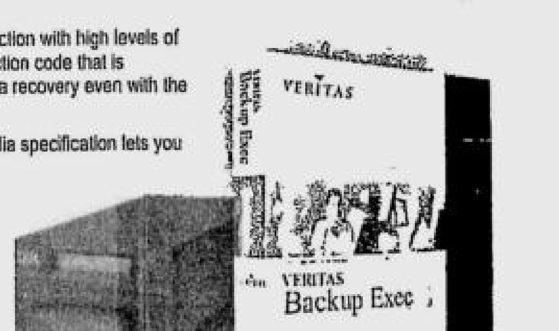
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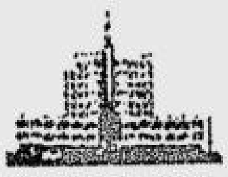

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For the 3-year requirement of
Liquid Chlorine

Maynilad Water Services, Inc. (MWSI) intends to pre-qualify all interested applicants for the bidding of the 3-year requirement of Liquid Chlorine, as indicated below:

LIQUID CHLORINE
(AWWA B-301-92)

Year	Delivery Place	Quantity
2003-2004	LMTP-1	1,233 MT
	LMTP-2	792 MT
2004-2005	LMTP-1	1,237 MT
	LMTP-2	793 MT
2005-2006	LMTP-1	1,233 MT
	LMTP-2	792 MT
TOTAL QUANTITY		6,080 MT

Interested Bidders may, beginning February 11 until February 28, 2003 and upon payment of a non-refundable pre-qualification documents fee in the amount of P2,000.00 payable to MWSI, obtain further information and secure a complete set of pre-qualification forms, technical specifications and terms and conditions from the address below:

PURCHASING DEPARTMENT
Basement, MWSI Office, MWSS Compound
Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City
Telephone No. 435-33-66; Fax No. 928-23-03

Deadline for submission of accomplished pre-qualification documents is on March 11, 2003, at the above stated address. Only applicants who successfully pre-qualify shall be invited to procure the tender documents and submit bids through E-Bidding. Disqualification applicants shall be notified in writing.

(Sgd.) IGNACIO B. GIMENEZ
SAVP, Corporate Logistics

(PDI–Feb. 11 & 12, 2003)

Republika ng Pilipinas
Pambansang Pangasiwaan ng Patubig
(National Irrigation Administration)
Lungsod ng Quezon

INVITATION TO BID

ONE (1) UNIT HYDRAULIC WALKING EXCAVATOR FOR MALITUBOG-MARIDAGAO IRRIGATION PROJECT
BID NO. MMIP-039-03

The Philippine Government has obtained a loan from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) for the prosecution of the Malitubog-Maridagao Irrigation Project (PH-P112). Part of the Loan shall be used to procure eligible expenditure as follows:

One (1) unit Hydraulic Walking Excavator
Wheel type 0.30 cu. m. (min.) capacity with engine power of 75 HP (min.)

The National Irrigation Administration (NIA) as the Implementing Agency of the Project invites eligible bidders to participate in the tender in accordance with the procurement guidelines of the JBIC. Interested bidders may obtain bid documents starting 12 February 2003 at the Procurement Division, Ground Floor, NIA Bldg., Diliman, Quezon City, Tel. No. 921-3906 and upon payment of non-refundable amount of Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000.00).

Bids must be delivered and shall be publicly opened on 20 February 2003, 2:00 PM at the Conference Room of the Systems Operation and Equipment Management, 4th Floor, IEC Bldg., NIA Complex, Quezon City.

All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security equivalent to at least 2% of the total bid price. Bid security shall be in the form of Bank Draft/ Guarantee/Irrevocable Letter of Credit, Cash, Cashier's Check, Manager's Check or any combination thereof.

Delivery of the goods must be before the closing date of the loan on 11 May 2003. Payment shall be made by Transfer Procedure of the JBIC.

The NIA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, declare the bidding a failure or waive any or all informalities or to award such bids to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous and shall meet the closing date of the loan.

(Sgd.) MARCELINO V. TUGAOEN, JR.
BAC Chairman

Inquirer–Feb. 6 &11, 2003

BELGIAN MALINOIS PUPS
for sale
9 male and 5 female
P15K each
Call Mr. Boy Lee
941-32-42

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Noritake
BODEGA SALE
60% OFF
Factory Seconds on Chinawares / Decorated / Plain White until Feb. 16
Metro Mla: 18 Panay Ave QC
Tel. 3738814 /(0917)8400026
Pampanga: DFS DutyFree Shop Clarkfield, Angeles
Open on Sat. / Sun. Hurry!!!

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late FELICIDAD S. TABERNERO has been extra-judicially settled with waiver of rights, participation & ownership among her heirs as per Doc. 212, Page 44, Book I, Series of 2003, before Atty. Clarissa Serina-Ramos, Notary Public Mandaluyong City.
(PDI-Feb. 4, 11, & 18 2003)

ANNOUNCEMENT

CAREGIVER TRNG 5276418

PERSONAL

NOVENA PRAYER TO ST. JUDE O, Holy St. Jude Apostle and martyr, great in virtue, rich in miracles, near in kinsman of Jesus Christ, faithful intercessor of all who invoke your special patronage in time of need. To you I have recourse from the depth of my heart and humbly beg to whom God has given such great power to come to my assistance. Help me in my present, urgent petition (make your request). In return, I promise to make your name known and cause you to be invoked. Saint Jude, pray for us and all who invoke your aid. Pray this nine times a day for nine consecutive days. On the eight day your prayers will be answered, for this prayer has never known to fail. Please don't forget to publish this once your wish is granted.
R.V.Z.

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT Holy Spirit thou who make me see everything and show me the way to reach my ideal. You who give me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and who are in all instances of my life with me. I, in this short dia logue, want to thank You for everything and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from You, no mat ter how great the material desires maybe. I want to be with You and my loved ones in Your Perpetual Glory. Amen.
-Z.R.A

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES

Official Depository Bank of the Republic of the Philippines

INVITATION TO BID

Sealed proposals together with the 10% bid bond for the purchase on **CASH BASIS** of the Bank properties listed below will be received at the **GSD Conference Room, 25th Floor, LBP Plaza not later than February 19, 2003 @ 10:00 a.m.** at which place, date and time, said proposals will be opened in the presence of attending bidders.

In case of CLOSELY CLUSTERED TOP BIDS (defined as having the second highest bid which is not below 90% of the highest bid), the opening of the sealed bids will be immediately followed by an open auction in which all bidders whose bids are not below 80% of the highest bid may participate. **The minimum increase in the open bidding should not be lower than Php1,000.00.**

	PROPERTY DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	MINIMUM BID
1)	1,689-sq.m. parcel of vacant lot	Madrigal Business Park, Alabang, Muntinlupa	Php 114,000,000
2)	Two (2) cont. parcels of land (Lots 1786 & 2286, both of S.C. de Malabon Estate) containing an area of 73,917sq.ms. and 10,642sq.ms.	Bo. Calibuyo, Tanza, Cavite	42,101,000
3)	Two (2) cont. parcels of land (Lots 1789 & 2284, both of S.C. de Malabon Estate) containing an area of 65,384sq.ms. and 37,298sq.ms.	Bo. Calibuyo, Tanza, Cavite	30,715,000
4)	1,500-sq.m. parcel of land (Lot 2-D (LRC) Psd-35214)	Outlook Drive, Gibraltar, Baguio City	15,000,000
5)	42,449-sq.m. parcel of land (Lot 1787	Bo. Calibuyo, Tanza, Cavite	12,504,000
6)	Seven (7) residential condo. units with 12 parking slots (PS)	) 8 Wack Wack Road Condominium) Wack Wack Road, Mandaluyong) City	
	6.1 Unit 36C/174sq.m. with 2 PS	)	11,862,000
	6.2 Unit 35C/174sq.m. with 2 PS	)	11,804,000
	6.3 Unit 34C/174sq.m. with 2 PS	)	11,746,000
	6.4 Unit 33C/174sq.m. with 2 PS	)	11,688,000
	6.5 Unit 30C/174sq.m. with 2 PS	)	11,514,000
	6.6 Unit 98/146sq.m. with 1 PS	)	8,402,000
	6.7 Unit 33E/108sq.m. with 1 PS	)	6,606,000
7)	68.74-sq.m. residential townhouse, identified as Unit 135	Brentwood Heights, Parañaque City	2,400,000
8)	1,126-sq.m. parcel of land	Bo. Canlalay, Biñan, Laguna	2,152,000
9)	Two (2) contiguous parcels of land containing an area of 336sq.m. & 315sq.m. with residential building/ perimeter fence	Brgy. Wawa, Pililla, Rizal	1,537,000
10)	156-sq.m. parcel of land with one-storey commercial building*	Poblacion, San Pablo-Pedro, Aurora, Isabela	1,050,000
11)	150-sq.m. parcel of land (Lot 5, Blk. 41, Pcs-04-004464)	Madrid Street, Town & Country West Subd., Bo. Molino, Bacoor, Cavite	570,000
12)	242-sq.m. parcel of land with 2 residential Bldgs.	Poblacion, Rizal, Nueva Ecija	528,000
13)	204-sq.m. parcel of land (Lot 55, Blk. 31	Pulong Buhangin, Sta. Maria, Bulacan	245,000
14)	One (1) unit Dark Green 1997 "Nissan" Patrol Safari 4x4 with Plate No. SFK296	LBP Plaza, Malate, Manila	500,000

For any inquiry, please contact Special Assets Department (SPAD) at Tel. Nos. 405-7366/7247/7248. Bidding forms may be obtained from (SPAD), 25th Flr., Land Bank Plaza, 1598 M.H. Del Pilar, Malate, Manila.

*For Item No. 10, public bidding will be held at LBP Leasing Corp., 4th Flr., Century Tower Condo., Bldg. No. 100 Tordesillas St., Salcedo Village, Makati City. For inquiry and bidding forms, please contact Ms. Beth or Ms. Riza at Tel. Nos. 893-5180/817-4540.

If for any reason that above-mentioned date is declared a non-working holiday, then the public bidding shall be held on the next working day at the same time and place aforementioned.

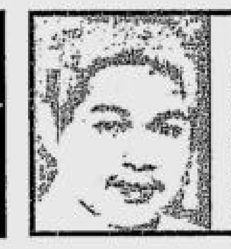
Prospective bidders are enjoined to inspect the above listed properties before entering their bids. The sale of the properties shall be on **"AS-IS-WHERE-IS" BASIS**. The winning bidder/s shall take possession of the awarded properties without seeking assistance from the Bank. The award in favor of the winning bidder/s shall be subject to the approval of the LBP approving authorities.

LAND BANK RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY THEREIN AND TO ACCEPT THE BID MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE BANK. THE DECISION OF THE LBP SHALL BE FINAL AND BINDING.

COMMITTEE ON ASSET DISPOSAL

(PDI--Feb. 11, 2003)

POEA
24-HR HOTLINES
722-1144 • 722-1155



NOTICE

JONATHAN CAIDO is no longer connected with UNIVERSAL STAFFING SVCS. INC. Any transaction entered through him will not be honored by the company.

NOTICE OF TENDER OFFER TO THE STOCKHOLDERS OF

PHILSTAR.COM, INC.

(Formerly Selecta Dairy Products, Inc.)

To All Shareholders of PHILSTAR.COM, Inc. ("Philstar")

Please be informed that on 20 December 2003, JEG Development Corporation ("JEG") and MAI-I Resources Corporation ("MAI-I") acquired from RFM Corporation, 93,390,193 and 124,099,755 common shares of stock, respectively, of Philstar constituting in the aggregate approximately 96.71% of the issued and outstanding capital stock of Philstar.

In compliance with the Securities Regulation Code and its implementing rules, JEG and MAI-I (collectively the "Bidders") are undertaking a Tender Offer in favor of all stockholders of Philstar as of 31 January 2003, other than the Bidders, at the price of P0.482781 per share. The Tender Offer covers 7,390,099 common shares of stock of Philstar owned by stockholders other than the Bidders, constituting approximately 3.29% of the issued and outstanding capital stock of Philstar. The consideration is payable by 24 March 2003.

Stockholders as of January 31, 2003 (the "Record Date") may tender all or a portion of their Philstar common shares for acceptance and purchase by the Bidders under the Terms Of The Tender Offer, beginning at 9:00 a.m. of February 10, 2003 until 3:00 p.m. of March 14, 2003 (the "Tender Offer Period"). This period will not be extended.

Tendering stockholders of Philstar who hold stock certificates ("Scrip Stockholders") should submit within the Tender Offer Period the duly accomplished Application To Sell Shares to be sent to the stockholders and all documents required under the Terms Of The Tender Offer to Securities Transfer Services, Inc. (the "Depository"), at 4th Floor, Benpress Bldg., Exchange Road corner Meralco Avenue, Pasig City with Fax No. 871-7148 (Contact Persons Mr. Angelo G. Macabuhay (02) 449-6040, Ms. Menchie Millares (02) 449-6155 and Mr. Eduardo Castro (02) 449-6169).

Scripless Stockholders, i.e. shareholders whose shares are held by brokers under their respective Philippine Central Depository accounts must authorize their respective brokers (the "Participating Brokers") to sell their shares under the Terms Of The Tender Offer and in accordance with the instructions to Participating Brokers to be provided. Participating Brokers must accomplish and file the Application To Sell Shares on behalf of the tendering Scripless Stockholders to ATR-Kim Eng Securities, Inc. (the "Broker") at 17/F Tower One and Exchange, Ayala Avenue, Makati City, with Telephone No. 849-8888, Fax No. 848-5285 (Contact persons: Ms. Nilaida S. Enriquez and Ms. Rosalie O. dela Cruz), together with all documents required under the Terms Of The Tender Offer.

Scripless Stockholders must also cause their Participating Broker to electronically transfer their tendered Philstar shares to the Broker prior to 3:00 p.m. of 14 March 2003. The Broker shall hold their Philstar shares as custodian under the Tender Offer.

Defective applications (such as but not limited to those where there is a discrepancy between specimen signatures provided), must be corrected within the Tender Offer Period to avoid rejection. Hence, shareholders are strongly urged to tender their shares at the earliest possible time to ensure that any defect in the Application To Sell Shares may still be corrected. Shareholders are also urged tp provide or indicate their telephone or contact numbers in their respective application forms to allow the Depository or the Participating Broker, as the case may be, to inform them immediately of any deficiency in their applications.

Payment of tendered shares covered by accepted Applications to Sell Shares will be on 24 March 2003 by check through the Paying Agent, Securities Transfer Agent, Inc. at its address stated above. Any payment not collected within thirty (30) calendar days from 24 March 2003 shall be dispatched by registered mail to the last recorded address of the tendering stockholder or Participating Broker, at their risk.

Tendering stockholders shall have the right to withdraw any tendered Philstar common shares in accordance with the Terms Of The Tender Offer, at any time during the Tender Offer Period or, if the tendered Philstar Shares have not been accepted for payment up to sixty (60) days from commencement of the Tender Offer Period.

The Tender Offer is subject to the terms of conditions described in the Terms of the Tender Offer and in case of conflict between this Notice and the Terms Of The Tender Offer, the latter shall prevail.

A Tender Offer Statement (SEC Form 19-1) will be filed at the commencement of the Offer Period with the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Philippine Stock Exchange, Inc., pursuant to the Securities Regulation Code and its implementing rules. Copies of SEC Form 19-1 will be made available at the expense of the Bidders, upon request from the Depository or the Broker.

The financial adviser of the Bidders. ATR-Kim Eng Capital Partners, Inc., has confirmed that resources are available to the Bidders sufficient to satisfy full acceptance of the tender offer.

REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION MAY BE MADE TO THE DEPOSITORY OR BROKER.

JEG DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
By:
(Sgd.) JOSE E. GARCIA
President

MAI-I RESOURCES CORPORATION
By:
(Sgd.) RAMONA A. DE GARCIA
President

(PDI – Feb. 10, 11 & 12, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Finance
BUREAU OF CUSTOMS
PORT OF MANILA
Customs District II-A
South Harbor, Manila

NOTICE OF CLOSURE

Notice is hereby given that the Customs Bonded Warehouses (CBWs) enumerated in Annexes "A" (FTI), "B" (GTMBWD), "C" (MMBWD), and "D" (PPBWD) hereof were ordered closed by virtue of the Closure Orders issued by the District Collector of Customs, Port of Manila, and duly approved by the Commissioner of Customs pursuant to Section 1905 of the Tariff and Customs Code of the Philippines, as implemented by Customs Administrative Order No. 2-91 and Customs Memorandum Order No. 39-91.

The Closure Orders are without prejudice to the right of the Bureau to recover any outstanding liabilities of those CBWs such as due to unliquidated entries and unexplained withdrawals/missing inventories as well as pursue other appropriate administrative/legal actions against the concerned parties.

For the information of the Operators of subject CBWs and other parties concerned, this Notice of Closure is hereby issued at the Port of Manila, South Harbor, Port Area, Manila, this 7th day of February 2003.

(Sgd.) NAPOLEON L. MORALES
District Collector

Approved: (Sgd.) Atty. ANTONIO M. BERNARDO
Commissioner of Customs

ANNEX "A"

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Finance
BUREAU OF CUSTOMS
PORT OF MANILA
Customs District II-A
South Harbor, Manila

FTI CUSTOMS OFFICE

NAME OF COMPANY	CBW NO.	ADDRESS
1. AVSL GARMENTS	G-839	#2163 Fatima St. San Miguel, Makati Metro Manila
2 CHUNG-FU PHILS.	M-1298	The Taipan Palace, Unit 1503-1506 Emerald Ave., Ortigas Center
3 ENGLORY IND'L CORP.	G-1239	Suite 908 Ferros Bel-Air Tower, Polaris St., Bel-Air Makati, M.Mla.
4 FASHION LINK CORP	G-1173	AFPRSBS Ind'l. Park Km. 12 East Service Rd. SSH-way, Taguig, M.M.
5. HONEY TREE APPAREL	G-1201	38 New Slaughter House Compound, FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila
6. JAPAN CLOTH INC.	M-1292	Phivdec Indusirial Estate Veterance Center, Taguig, M.M.
7. MIDAS DIVERSIFIED	G-614	A. Rodriguez Ave., Manggahan, Pasig City
8 PRECISION GARMENTS	G-1038	8407 South Superhighway West, Parañaque, Metro Manila
9 TYPTEX INT'L CORP.	G-1595	1158-1158-B Pasong Tamo St., Makati City

MISC. MFG., BONDED WHSE DIV.
LIST OF CBW'S FOR CLOSURE
7-FEB-03

ANNEX "C"

NAME OF COMPANY	CBW NO.	ADDRESS
AMPERSAND INT'L	M-1137	Auditorium Midmart Complex, cor. Roces & Panay Ave., Q.C.
CENTURY CANNING	M-792	32 1st Ave., Bo. Bagumbayan, Taguig, M.M.
COMLOCK MFG	M-1674	AA Development Compound, P. dela Cruz St., Sitio Gitna Kaybiga, Caloocan City
MANILA CORDAGE	M-591	2372 Osmeña St., Makati City
NEW POLYTEX	M-1649	People's Tech. Complex, Carmona, Cavite
ONDA BUTTON SELLING	M-994	People's Tech. Complex, Carmona, Cavite
PHIL. PETROCHEMICALS	M-774	8th Flr., Vernida IV Condo. Alfaro St., Salcedo Village, Makati City
R S TEXTILE	M-1616	Balubaran St., Bo. Duhat, Bocaue, Bulacan
STERLING TOBACCO	M-1413	305-307 J.P. Rizal, Mandaluyong City
TNC CHEMICALS	M-1613	Km. 58, Turbina, Calamba, Laguna

ANNEX "B"

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Finance
BUREAU OF CUSTOMS

LIST OF IN-ACTIVE CBW
under GTMBWD
NOT INCLUDED IN THE NOTICE OF CLOSURE
PUBLISHED IN THE PHIL. STAR DATED JAN. 16, 2003

NAME OF COMPANY AND ADDRESS	CBW#	LAST DATE OF TRANSACTION	UNLIQUIDATED NO. OF ENTRIES	DUTIES & TAXES	ACTION TAKEN
C.Q. Johnsons 6701 Jefferson St., Makati City	G-409	1987	6	2,308,255.00	
Eastman Garments 53 Tomi St., cor. Sct. Borromeo, Timog, QC	G-968		34	9,133,225.00	DEMAND LETTER ISSUED DATED 10/10/02

PUBLIC/PRIVATE BONDED WAREHOUSE DIVISION
LIST OF INACTIVE CUSTOMS BONDED WAREHOUSES

ANNEX "D"

	CBW NO.	IMPORTER	ADDRESS	CLOSURE CASE NO.
1	232	ANNE CORP.		
2	577	ARCADIA		
3	232	ARMS CORPORATION		
4	650	ASIA SYNTHETIC		
5	454	ATLANTIC PULP & PAPER		
6	123	B. TRINIDAD INC		
7	589	CDCP		
8	609	CONNEL BROTHERS		
9	582	DYNETICS INC.		
10	609	EASTERN PACIFIC STEEL		
11	637	EVERTEX IND. INC.		
12	654	FALCON RARE METALS		
13	668	FAR EAST WIRE & CABLE		
14	419	FILIPINAS CEMENT		
15	873	FRANCISCO MOTORS CORP.	Pamplona, Las Piñas	
16	58	INTEGRATED FREIGHT		
17	381	INT'L. TEXTILE MILLS		
18	895	JADE ACCREDITED AIRCON	Bo. Talon, Las Piñas, Metro Manila	
19	1054	KINGSBRIDGE INT'L.	New Panaderos St., Sta. Ana, MM	
20	1003	KROW INT'L.		
21	456	KUENZLER STREIFF		
22	542	LA SUERTE CIGAR	KM. 14 South Superhighway, Parañaque, MM	
23	132-A	LIRAG TEXTILE MILLS	Bo. Acacia, Malabon, MM	
24	990	LUCKY TEXTILE MILLS	Malinacan, Meycauayan, Bulacan	
25	98-A	MABUHAY IBKG	A. Reyes Bldg., Beaterio St., Intramuros, Mla.	
26	684	MAKATI MACHINERY & EQUIPT.		
27	524	MEAD JOHNSON PHILS.		
28	426-A	MEDALLA ENTERPRISES		
29	169	MLA. BAY HOSIERY		
30	382	MOBIL OIL PHILS.		
31	1053	MONARK EQUIPT.	160 E. Rodriguez St. Ave., Libis, Quezon City	
32	803	MVR TV PICTURE TUBE	Pioneer St. cor. Williams St., Pasig, Rizal	
33	664	NEW RIVIERA DEVT.		
34	857	PACIFIC PRODUCTS	6th Floor, Insular Life Bldg., Ayala Ave., Makati City	
35	366	PAN ASIATIC PHILS.	307 Wilson Bldg., Juan Luna, Manila	
36	731	PASIG STEEL	377 G. Puyat Ave., Makati City	
37	813	PEGGY PHILS., INC.		
38	12-A	PHIL. CONSOLIDATED INV'T.	575 Atlanta St., Port Area, Manila	
39	915	PHIL. EXPLOSIVE	Fontana, Buxton, Pasig M.M.	
40	660	PORCELANA MARIWASA, INC.		
41	422	R.B. ENTERPRISES		
42	845	R.C. SILVERIO	41 Biga Silang Cavite	
43	634	RADIOLA TOSHIBA		
44	712	RESINS INC.	E. Rodriguez Ave., Pasig, M.M.	
45	479	RUBY IND'L. CORP.		
46	3-A	SHELL PHILS.	Mla. Int'l Airport, Pasay City	
47	3	SHELL PHILS	Shell House, Roxas Blvd.	
48	301-A	SHIPPING & WHSING SERV.		
49	540	SILVANIA TOBACCO		
50	484	SLEEPRITE BEDDING		
51	533	SMITH BELL		
52	545	SOLID CORP. INT'L.	545 McArthur Highway, Valenzuela, Bulacan	
53	989	SOUTHERN TEXTILE MILLS	Bo. Lawa, Calamba, Laguna	
54	323	SQUIRES BINGHAM MFG.	Parang, Marikina, M.M.	
55	744-A	STA. ANA WAREHOUSE	1825 A. Francisco St., Sta. Ana, M.M.	
56	572	STAMPADOR	516 P. Santos Bldg., Plaza Lacson, Sta. Cruz, Mla.	
57	452	STENIEL MFG. CORP.		
58	1169	STERLING TOBACCO	305-307 Jose Rizal St., Mandaluyong, M.M.	
59	835	SUPERIOR PHARMACRAFT	245 P. Tuazon Blvd., Cubao, Quezon City	
60	1001	TAIWAN PRODUCTS	7817 Santilan Cor. Javier St., Makati City	
61	475	TEXTILE FIBER		
62	740	THE GOLDEN COUNTRY FARMS	2315 Aurora Blvd., Pasay City	
63	865	TRI-UNION IND	Km. 17 Bo. Pulo Cabuyao, Laguna	
64	260	UNION CHEMICAL INC.	260 Rosario, Pasig	
65	205	UNION IND. INC.	Bo. J. Kangkong St., Edsa, Quezon City.	
66	324	UNION TEXTILE CORP.	Pureza St., Sta. Mesa, Mla.	
67	623	UNISOL IND'L. CORP.	Bo. Makiling, Calamba, Laguna	
68	567	UNITED ASIA MFG.		
69	1	VINYL PROD. PHILS., INC.	Polaris Subd., Cabcaban Mariveles, Bataan	
70	692	YUPANGCO YAMAHA MUSIC	Gay Bldg. Cor. Reposo, Buendia Ext., Makati M.M.	

REAL ESTATE
E-mail: pr_real_estate@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

USING FUTURISTIC MATERIAL

Old structures get new lease on life

By Charles E. Buban

FILIPINO repair engineers have a new option when extending the life span of several aging and poorly constructed structures around the country.

Unlike the conventional steel and concrete reinforcements, the Tyfo Fibrwrap composite system is an innovative, yet stiffer and economical method of rehabilitating concrete masonry and wood structures.

It works by wrapping or covering structures to be repaired in a way similar to wallpaper installation.

But the woven fiber-like material together with the composite epoxy employed by the system makes the repaired structure's shear and flexural capacity and axial load capability improve three to five times than when using steel and concrete.

Withstand strong quakes

"In addition, the ductility of the repaired structure will increase from a factor of 3 to a factor of 10—qualities needed to withstand extremely strong earthquakes and everyday stress," revealed Eduard Chong of EC Structural Composites, the first in the country to employ the system in structural retrofitting, seismic strengthening and corrosion protection.

EC Structural is authorized by Fyfe Asia of Singapore to market, sell and install Tyfo Fibrwrap composite system products in the Philippines.

Several structures in the country have already been employed with the system including the Supreme Court building lobby, several Asian Development Bank-built bridges in Antique province and piers of the Cebu Ports Authority.

"Here in the Philippines we are still in the phase of introducing it," revealed Chong.

Chong related however, that their problem really was convincing the heavy construction industry here to accept composites as the new generation of retrofitting technology. "The system has been long extensively employed in numerous US highway bridges and major structures."

Aerospace technology

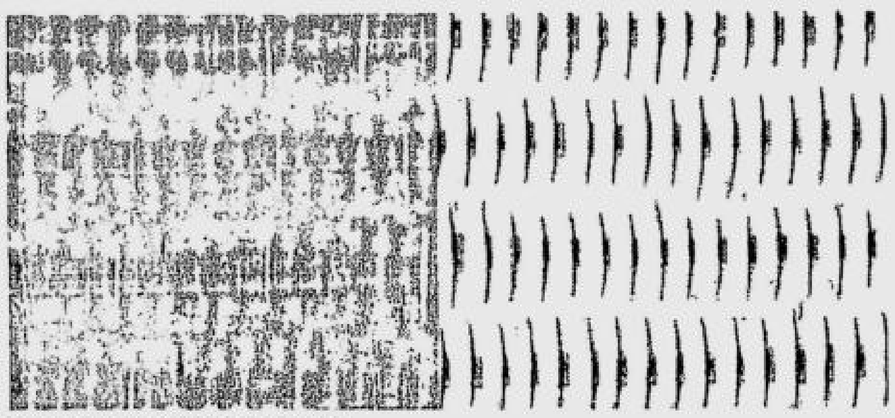
The Tyfo Fibrwrap composite system uses materials originally used in aerospace industry, particularly in building stealth aircraft in the '80s.

The woven fiber is actually made up of E-glass and polyaramide (similar to Kevlar).

"They are among the strongest and stiffest of the reinforcing materials being used today in structural composites," described Chong.

A polyaramide is two-and-half times as strong as E-glass, five times as strong as steel, and over 10 times as strong as aluminum.

"We're transferring technology from one use to another, and obviously there will be some resistance to the changes," said Chong whose company is just over two years old.



WEAVE OF THE FUTURE
Using fibers of E-glass and polyaramide, this fabric when saturated with composite epoxy extends the life span of damaged structures to several more years.

Tested extensively

Tyfo Fibrwrap composite system has been tested in numerous independent laboratories in the United States.

At a University of California laboratory, engineers had tested a six-foot diameter, reinforced concrete column (identical to bridge post) until its structure came apart.

They had applied a 3,104 kN force, a force with the intensity of an earthquake. Crews were then called in to repair the damage using the Tyfo Fibrwrap composite system.

When the repaired structure was tested again, the column this time, withstood the testing machine's maximum limit of 4,490 kN.

The system was also proven in actual situation: A cathedral in El Salvador retrofitted with the system remained intact even when three earthquakes of 7.6, 6.6 and 5.1 on the Richter scale hit the vicinity of the church in a span of five weeks in January 2001.

Economical

Generally, Tyfo Fibrwrap composite system costs less than all other retrofitting methods.

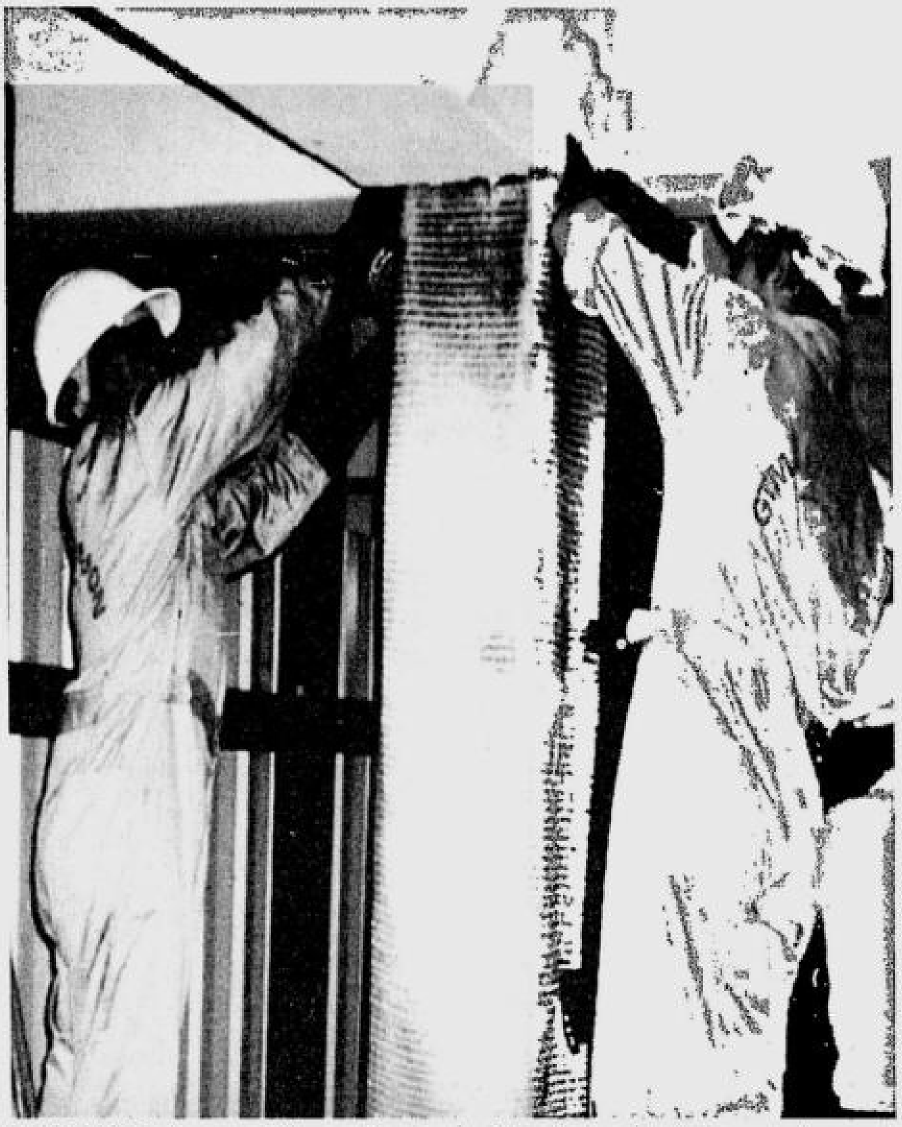
"A project employing the system will require only a small number of crew who will only need hand tools to prepare and install the composite systems," revealed Chong.

According to Chong, the ease of installation and quality of service make composite strengthening a much more cost-effective solution for strengthening and retrofitting structures.

"Installation takes a much shorter time—a square foot of Tyfo Fibrwap can be applied in 1/10 of an hour," Chong said. "Unlike rigid and heavy sections of steel plates and jackets, this system can be carried by one person to the structure, and applied in a wrapping format, even where clearance is down to one inch."

Structures that have always been exposed to the weather will also benefit since the composite system can resist corrosion, water, salt, soil and other alkaline substances.

"Rusting of reinforcing steel in bridges or buildings is the main reason many of them fail structurally long before their designed life span," he said.



INSTALLING the system like a wallpaper significantly cuts the time to complete any project thus, making the system economical yet effective.

Least architectural impact

"Imagine our historical buildings dotted with protruding steel reinforcements. These structures need minimal architectural impact," said Chong.

The final thickness of structural composites is typically less than a few millimeters. Such a low-profile material provides as much strength as what a 10 to 20 centimeters of concrete and steel can provide.

Because of the inherent nature of composite materials, the architectural shape of the object to be repaired or strengthened can generally be preserved using the system.

"Rectangles, octagons, squares, ovals, flares and many other geometric shapes can be retrofitted with the system without significantly affecting the original shape," said Chong. "This means no loss of space and in addition, this lightweight material adds little to the dead-load of the structure."

BUILDING DREAMS

How a real estate broker works

By Alexis A. Acacio, Ph.D.

(First of two parts)

A REAL estate broker is your partner and adviser in your real estate transactions. Knowing the process in which the broker works can make one understand them better and therefore make the most of the relationship. As with any relationship, trust is very important and before this trust can be developed, the process on how brokers work can make us understand them better.

Real estate brokers are engaged in real estate transactions in behalf of a principal.

The broker expects a commission or a fee by negotiating for the sale, lease, purchase, mortgage or joint venture of real estate properties. He/she acts in behalf of a principal. The principal, in most cases, is the owner or developer of the property.

Real estate brokers involved in the selling and buying of real estate generally follow the following steps in going about their profession.

- **Secures properties for sale.** The broker secures an authority from a seller to negotiate for the sale of a property. He/she may also secure an authority from a buyer of a specific property. A broker for the lease, mortgage or exchange of property also obtains a similar authority. This process is called obtaining a listing (meaning a list of properties to negotiate for). During this process, the broker assesses the type and condition of the property, the specific location and description of the property, where it is, the condition of the title (whether it is authentic, mortgaged or not, clean or with a lien. etc.). He/she gets an authority to negotiate for the sale of a property from the owner that can either be exclusive or nonexclusive.

In an exclusive authority, only one listing broker is authorized to negotiate the transaction. This is common for large development projects in which the developer assigns a sales organization to market, present and negotiate for the sale of real estate properties. The exclusive marketing agent then focuses all its efforts to sell the entire project. In return, the developer or owner gives full support to its exclusive marketing agent in terms of higher commissions, office spaces, tripping vehicles, sales incentives, etc.

In a nonexclusive authority, the owner authorizes two or more brokers to negotiate for the real estate transaction. This is dealt with on a first-come, first-served basis. Most single transactions involving brokers is the nonexclusive type—that is many brokers may be selling the same property so it is common that the same property may be shown to a prospective buyer by many other brokers.

- **Looks for interested parties.** After securing a listing, the broker looks for interested buyers of the subject property. If the broker is a member of a real estate association or belongs to a circle of brokers, the listing is relayed to other brokers to increase the network of interested buyers. In real estate transactions, the sale or purchase of a property seldom involves a single broker. It is usually the effort of the seller's broker (the broker represents the seller) and the buyer's broker (the broker represents the buyer). In this case, the commission is split between the brokers in the transaction according to the agreed upon percentages.

A source of listing also includes the list of foreclosed properties that can be obtained from the asset management groups of banks and lending institutions. An advertisement in daily newspapers, radio and televisions is also a source of information for brokers. Try advertising your property in the classified ads and it is highly possible that of all the callers, there will be more brokers than direct buyers.

As brokers expand their network, they continuously secure available properties and they become known within an area among persons involved in real estate transactions.

- **Qualifies interested parties.**

After the real estate broker connects with the interested party, whether seller or buyer, the interested party should be a qualified one. A quick definition of a

HOW/B8

GET the best view of the sunset at 1322 Roxas Boulevard's superb balcony-inspired living room.

Getting best view of Manila Bay sunset

By Charles E. Buban

GOLDEN, fiery orange, ocher and pale grey sunsets are the colorful sights you'll see at this soon to be completed high-rise residential property overlooking the world-famous Manila Bay.

Located on the nonreclamation stretch on Roxas Boulevard at the corner of Padre Faura and Leon Ma. Guerrero in Ermita, Manila, this towering 57-story 1322 Roxas Boulevard is a perfect destination to one of the most stunning sunset scenes this part of the world.

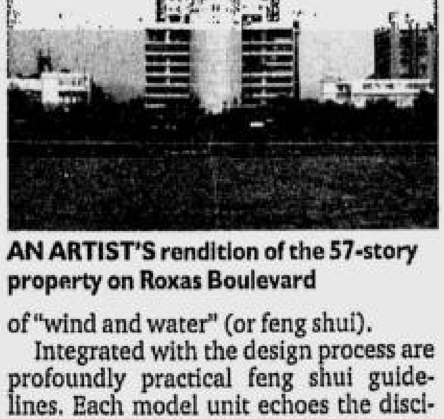
INQUIRER was recently blessed to sample the life in one of the 300 suites being offered at 1322 Roxas Boulevard—a three-bedroom 187-sq.-m area at the 14th floor.

At that height, one will have a vantage view of the world below plus the bay with the sun slowly sinking out west. Looking through the coated glass window dominating all its western sides, we are already imagining ourselves sipping wine, sitting lazily as we wait for the day to end in golden splendor.

Fortune and happiness

Developer Moldex Land Inc. envisaged family fortune and happiness when it conceptualized the architectural design of 1322 Roxas Boulevard.

Combining oriental spatial psychology with western esthetic concepts, the developer said the condominium is virtually surrounded with the good elements of "wind and water" (or feng shui).



AN ARTIST'S rendition of the 57-story property on Roxas Boulevard

Integrated with the design process are profoundly practical feng shui guidelines. Each model unit echoes the discipline of home as a place of comfort, privacy, security and beauty.

According to its developer, these favorable orientations expose the residents to positive environmental energies, both invisible and intangible, that can bring "sheng chi" or improvements in the areas of well-being, relationships, health and prosperity.

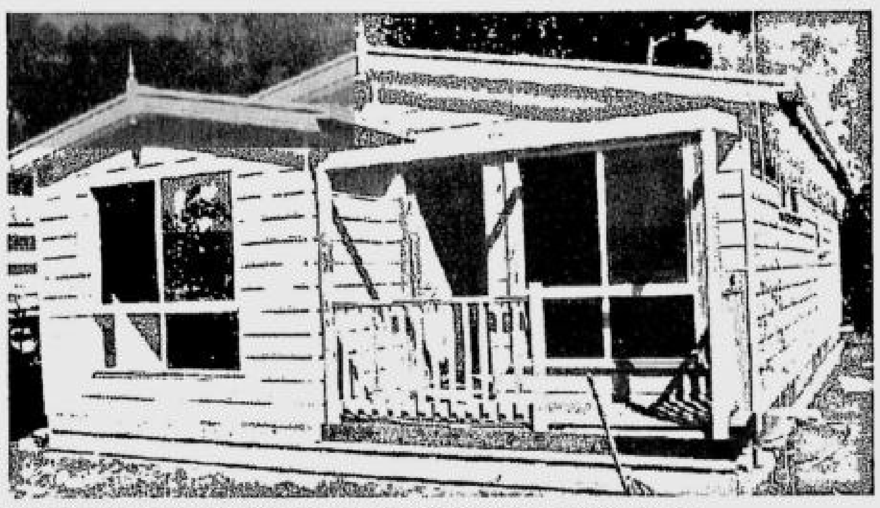
Exclusive address

The condominium project is designed as an exclusive and low-density residential address. One of the architectural design consultants, a California-based Architecture International Ltd. which is responsible for the design of over 4,000 high-rise residential units all over the world, as well as hotels retail complexes and educational centers including Harvard and Stanford Universities.

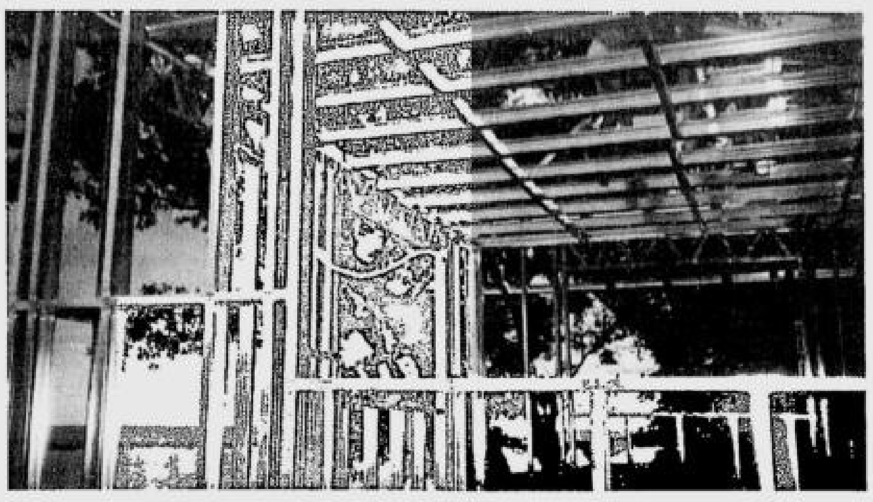
Each suite—with floor areas ranging from 187 to 306 sq. m—has a living and dining room with a hallway and foyer, powder room, space efficient kitchen with modular cabinets and laminated countertops, master's bedroom, regular bedrooms, a maid's room and a utility room.

Each bedroom has its own toilet and bath.

Not only in the rooms, the residents will also be pampered in the building's most complete state-of-the-art amenities including physical fitness center with sauna and massage rooms, a Sesame Street-inspired children's playroom, an underwater-lit tabletop pool and a kid's wading pool, a poolside party area and a bar including a multipurpose ballroom that can accommodate 350 guests.



MELBOURNE, Australia's version of stell frame housing structure



STEEL and screw plus sugarcane bagasse complete the art

Cheap steel and sugarcane houses gain mixed following

By Tessa R. Salazar

STEEL frame and sugarcane pulp houses are in high demand since the technology was first featured in the INQUIRER, Nov. 3, 2002.

The Scottsdale steel frame housing technology, which can complete a house in just five days, was originally developed in New Zealand and combines the power of computer-aided design with modern roll-forming technology. The machine can cut steel into specific sizes and execute any house design to suit a specific housing unit and is capable of producing housing components in eight hours, or five units of the same size for a 20-sq.-m house.

'Livable shells'

Introduced by the social housing foundation of the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Association to make cheap but "livable shells" for urban poor communities in the Philippines, the Scottsdale steel frame uses fire-proof, termite-proof and water-resistant sugarcane bagasse for its walling and cladding. The bagasse is processed by Cebu-based Enviroboard Manufacturing Corp. and was initially used as a substitute for plywood.

Demetrio L. Posadas, president of the Creba social housing foundation, said thousands of housing units would be built in various parts of the Philippines from Luzon to Mindanao.

For instance, more than 1,000 housing projects are in the pipeline for urban poor communities that will be relocated to Pandi, Bulacan, from the flooded areas of Malabon and Navotas.

Each 20-sq.-m unit will stand on a 75-sq.-m lot. The project, with the aid of the Community Mortgage Program of the government, will be partly paid by the "sweat equity" of the families who will be required to help build their own houses. The total house and lot package is estimated to cost P80,000.

Steel frame housing tech

Houses in another urban poor community in Bagong Silang, Caloocan City will use the steel frame housing technology. The Couples For Christ-initiated project, which will initially house 60 families in Caloocan, is targeting each unit price at P40,000 each.

CFC's Gawad Kalinga project initially used coco lumber for construction. Coco lumber, however, was not that durable, and needed to be changed every five years, according to architect Boy Morcilla of Creba's social housing foundation.

Another project in Pinugay, Antipolo is set for launch in March. There will be an initial 300 houses built, composed of 20-sq.-m row houses. This would be under the Community Home Mortgage program.

'Teachers' camp'

A low-cost house and lot pegged at P270,000 per unit is set to be built for Hong Kong-based overseas Filipino workers (OFWs). Initially, 300 houses will be built in San Juan, Batangas. Each unit will have a 32-sq.-m single-attached house with loft in a 70-sq.-m lot.

The Federation of Overseas Filipino Workers in Hong Kong is composed of more than 40,000 members.

Teachers in Davao and Bukidnon are also set to use the new housing technologies, with the help of the GLAD Program of the Pag-Ibig fund.

The Philippine Teachers' Foundation has proposed two projects, including the construction of 1,000 houses in its Davao chapter and 500 houses in its Bukidnon chapter.

Each 32-sq.-m unit single-attached house would be built on a 100-sq.-m lot. Each will cost P500,000 and is estimated to cost each teacher P4,500 per month.

The same technology, but using thicker enviroboards and well-selected paints, would also be utilized in affluent luxury country houses. Morcilla said that there are plans for the steel frame technology in first-class cottage country houses in Tagaytay City and the Lexber Home in Baguio City.

The advantage affluent residents have is the choice of walling and cladding to be used. For instance, they could have high-end Hardiflex boards and expensive roof tiles at their disposal.

Nevertheless, the new technologies in themselves would serve residents well, whatever their social status.

Flexible technology

Morcilla attested that steel frames would be impervious to earthquakes, as the structures would just sway in accordance with the earth's movements.

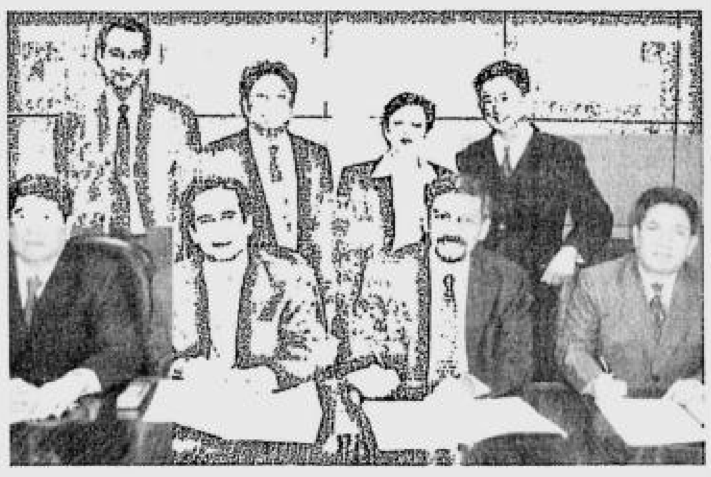
"The technology is flexible. You may want it to be as expensive or as cheap as you want but the steel frame structure would always look decent and elegant," Morcilla added.

Other projects will be located in nearby provinces such as Kawit in Cavite, and Surigao City. "We could come out with very competitive cottages. Our outreach program for Couples for Christ and Community Mortgage Program will always be there," said Posadas.

The building technology has been popular abroad, particularly in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Australia, Noumea and Dubai.

When Creba brought the portable Scottsdale to the Philippines, it also decided to use sugarcane bagasse (sugarcane pulp), which Posadas said doesn't crack, peel or chip off when nailed through even with common wire nail or cut with an ordinary saw, and is said to require less paint. It was also an effective heat insulator.

Providing added income for sugarcane farmers, using sugarcane bagasse also helps preserve trees, as claimed by manufacturing firm Enviroboard.



NEW ADDRESS
Quisumbing Torres law firm moves to Net One Center, Bonifacio Global City. Seated from left are Macario S. Rufino, president, 19-1 Realty; Jacques A. Dupasquier, chair, 19-1 Realty; lawyer Lucas M. Nunag, chair, management committee, Quisumbing Torres; and lawyer Ricardo P.C. Castro Jr., administrative partner, Quisumbing Torres. Standing, from left, are Timm Vollbrecht, associate director, commercial, FPDSavills Consultancy Phils. Inc.; Carlos S. Rufino, director, 19-1 Realty; Stella D. Rufino, sales director, 19-1 Realty: David T. Leechiu, general manager, FPDSavills Cosultancy Phils. Inc.

Hardiflex promo winners known

JAMES Hardie Philippines sales and marketing team recently drew the winners of the Hardi-Flex "Buy a Board, Fly Abroad" promo at the James Hardie Plant in Cabuyao, Laguna.

The sales and marketing team is composed of VP for sales and marketing Rob Kidd, national sales manager Jet Bije, assistant product manager Lei Punsalang, DTI representative Mena Alea, and marketing manager Junie Rondon.

The winners are Felicitas N. Cadion of Rodriguez, Rizal (grand prize—trip for two to Los Angeles, USA, plus US$1,000); Richie Tan of Pasig City and Jocelyn Gallego of Guimaras (second prize—trip for two to Bangkok, Thailand, plus US$500); Chona Velasquez and Armando Go, both of Cavite City and Ma. Ferres G. Alojado of Bacolod City (third prize—trip for two to Hong Kong plus US$500).

The complete list of winners is available at the James Hardie Customer Service Hotlines at 895-5427 (for Metro Manila) or 1-800-1-8885427 (outside Metro Manila) or at participating Hardi-Flex hardware stores nationwide.

Don't let termites in

WHO doesn't want a termite-free home? Whether you're building a new home or treating anew an old structure, answer this "four-way test" before choosing a termiticide for the job:

- **Does it provide lasting protection against termites?** A good termiticide won't rob you of sleep worrying about leaching and migration. Make sure the chemical you're using stays wherever you apply it so your home or building is protected from termites for a long time. Or you can invest in an anti-termite system that will serve as a treatment method to extinguish termites and a warning device for preventing future attacks.
- **Is it environment-safe?** Your goal is to protect the structure, not poison the ecosystem. If you want destructive termites off your property, don't do it at the expense of the environment. Knowing that the chemical you're applying inside your home or building is nature-friendly is important because it gives you the confidence that the termiticide will not persist in delicate, sensitive and undesired areas.
- **Is it safe on humans?** The chemical must be lethal to termites but safe on humans and on house pets. Be very, very sure that the termiticide you're applying is not hazardous to your children or your cats and dogs. If you're using an anti-termite technology, make sure that it is equipped with child-friendly features—this is very crucial since you're going to be applying the termite extinguisher around the house.
- **Does the chemical have a nasty, persistent odor?** Filipinos are known to prefer low-odor or no-odor chemicals, and with very good reasons. Strong odors, which are set off by impurities in the chemical, may pose health risks and cause household activities to be disrupted and business operations to be at a standstill for long periods of time to let the nasty smell out.

Keep your home and building safe from voracious termite foragers for good. US-based industry leader Dow AgroSciences developed Sentricon System, the technology that is now being used to protect the White House, the Statue of Liberty and other famous landmarks around the world.

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Malarayat Country Estates launch Feb. 15

ACTIVE Realty and Development sets a new standard in country estate living with the launch of the Mount Malarayat Country Estates in Malvar, Batangas on Saturday.

Architect Antonio Turalba Sr., chair of the Active Group, the developer, and Charlie Gorayeb, chair of Goram Development, the landowner, will lead the blessing and time capsule laying on site.

Also expected to grace the occasion are local officials of Malvar and Tanauan.

Guests will have a tour of the development in Malvar and the nearby Club Malarayat.

Malarayat Country Estates, a sprawling 550,891 square-meter first-class subdivision development, is less than an hour away from Metro Manila. It is an ideal setting for the dream vacation home complete with luscious foliage, fresh air and rustic country charm.

The community was master-planned to bring homeowners closer to nature with landscaped rotundas and tree-lined road and lakes greeting owners upon entry to the estates.

Upon full down payment, lot owners can immediately avail of the existing country club, sport, equestrian and children's center facilities, as well as the 27-hole championship all-weather golf course at the Mount Malarayat Golf and Country Club in nearby Lipa, subject to club rules and regulations.

HOUSE AND LOT WINNER
Robinsons Department Store (RDS) recently declared one of the three winners of its "Home Stretch" Christmas Grand Raffle promo. Winner Rosanna Villa Rodrigo with her husband, Montano, at their new South Square Village home in General Trias, Cavite. The couple, who hails from Calamba, Laguna, has two sons. The raffle promo was a joint project of RDS and Robinsons Homes Inc.

How a real estate. . .

From page B6

qualified prospect would be that he or she is able, willing and legally capable. If loan officers of banks have a prequalifying criteria, so do real estate brokers. The criteria include:

Real need—The reasons for buying real estate can be many—as a hedge against inflation, for use, for rental, as an investment and even to speculate that property values will go up in the future. The broker might not ask the buyer directly but would try to figure out the real reason the client would want to buy the property. A specific type of property satisfies a specific need.

Capacity to pay—The client should have the capacity to pay. Based on my experience in marketing real estate, some buyers simply have the "want" or desire to own a property but they simply do not have the capacity. It is best that we have a realistic sense of the property we want and the property that we can afford. Want and affordability should match in order to make the real estate transaction a reality.

Authority to buy—The person usually looking at a property is the buyer. But these days, some buyers buy for their busy relatives and their relatives abroad. It is common these days that the person paying for the property is out of the country and he/she simply relies on photographs of the property and other information that is sent to him/her. These people simply ask their relatives to buy in their behalf. Again, the person looking at a prospective property should have the authority to buy.

Do not get offended if your broker asks you details about some "personal" things especially when it comes to financial capacity. Brokers just want to make sure that they are not wasting their time on prospects who are not qualified. To show a piece of property to a client takes time—even days and the broker just wants to make sure that he/she is not wasting his/her time on a client who is only a "window shopper."

- **Brings prospective buyers to the properties.**

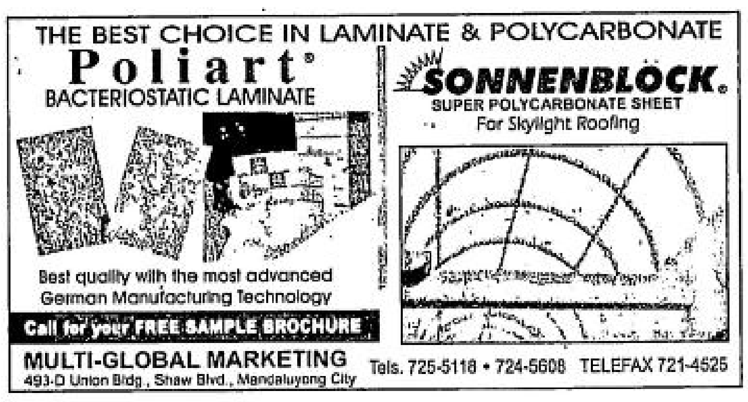
Tripping is the common term that real estate brokers use to show a prospective client a property that they feel would suit the needs and budget of their client. If the property being sold was a piece of gadget being brought to the customer's house, then it would be called a "demo." But since real estate is fixed and the customer should go and visit the property, then a trip is necessary, hence the word tripping is commonly used. Selling real estate is a long process and usually takes some time before a purchase decision is made.

During this process, the property is shown to the client and the features are explained in detail. If it is a vacant lot, the features of the lot are studied such as the topography, the shape, the boundaries and the other natural factors. If it is a subdivision lot, the entire subdivision is studied, the neighbors, the streets, drainage systems, availability of water supply, security, etc. If the property being considered is a structure such as a house, townhouse, condominium, industrial building or a commercial building, the various features of the structure are shown and discussed in detail.

A good broker should be quick to surmise when the property shown to a prospective client fits his/her needs. Some brokers simply force properties that clients do not want or simply could not afford. As a real estate broker myself, what I have discovered through the years is that it is best to be an adviser when it comes to fulfilling the needs of buyers. Brokers need to listen to the real needs of their clients before they can really sell.

Remember that your real estate broker is not your personal driver. Be courteous enough to arrange for a meeting site that would be convenient for both parties.

Once you have selected the property that you would want to own, it is now time to close in on the deal. This will be our topic for next week.



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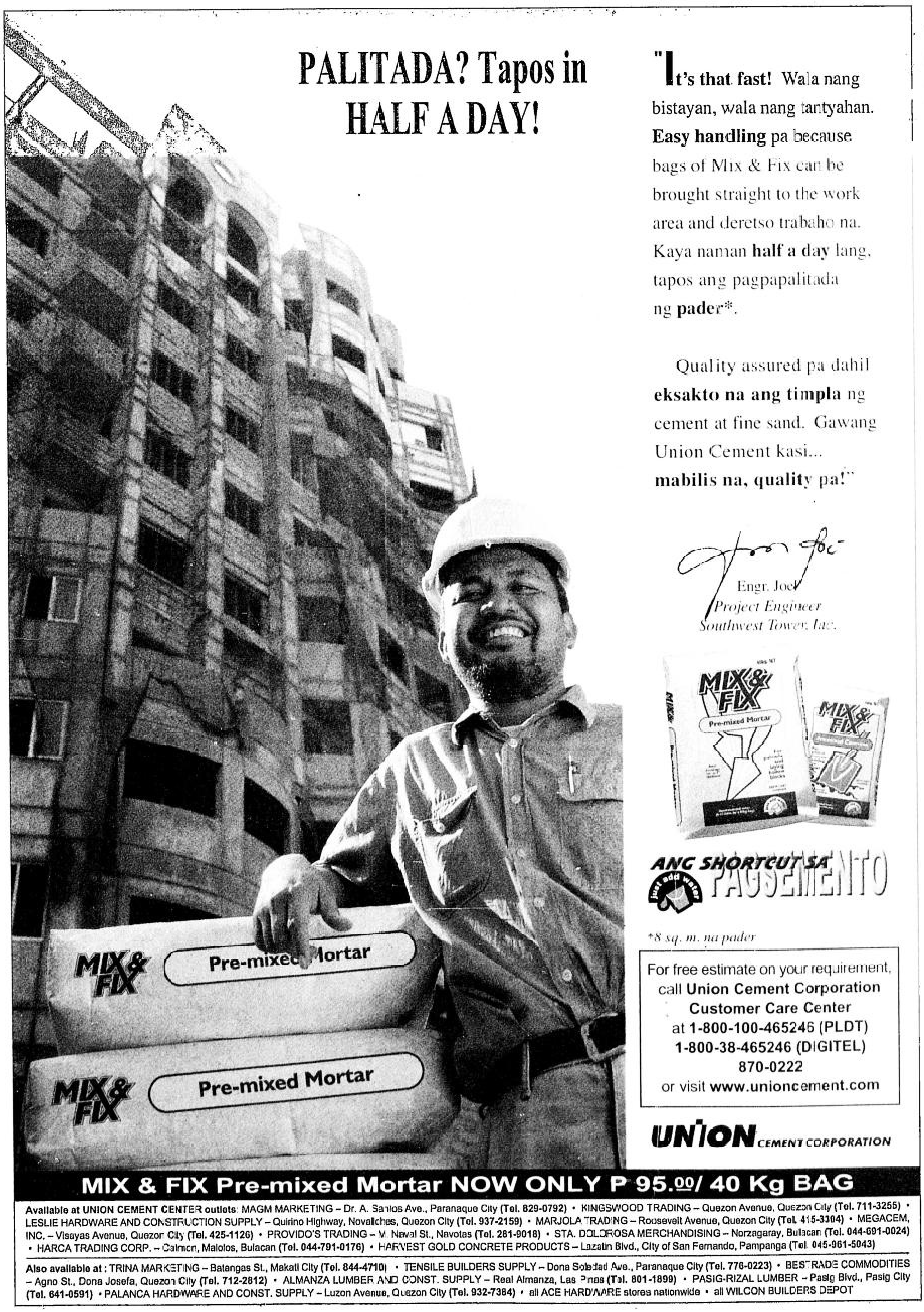

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Engr. CORNELIO DELA ROSA, SR.

September 26, 1908 – February 9, 2003

*now rests peacefully in the Grace and Goodness of our Lord and in the embrace of his loving wife **Quiting**.*

His bereaved children **Cornelio, Jr. (Budoy) & Esperanza, Rene & Cita, Hernando & Ludy, Ariston & Gianina delos Reyes, Dennis & Edna Sutton, Alma & Cora**; his grandchildren, his relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels in Guadalupe, Makati City.

Interment will be announced later.

"Life is changed, not ended."

Beatriz Laya Racho

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord on February 10, 2003 at the age of 100.

Her husband **Marciano** (†); children **Mila & Louie** (†), **Luz & Ernie, Dina & Belong, Joe & Baby, Des & Lina**; Her twenty-two (22) grandchildren, great grandchildren and relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at St. Jerome Emiliani Church, Alabang Town Center.
Interment will be at Everest Hills Memorial Park.

Lorenza Lingat Caingat

Widow of the late **HUGO PINEDA CAINGAT**

peacefully joined our LORD on February 9, 2003 at the age of 90.

Her beloved children **CLARITA** and **PAKITO SANTIAGO** (†), **CONSTANCIA** and **EMILIO GOPEZ**, **ROGELIO** and **DOROTHY**, **ROSITA** and **MELADIO SINGIAN**, **EDUARDO** (†) and **FRANCING**, **AUGUSTO**, **MARIO** and **ZARINA**, **VIVIAN** and **ENDY RAMOS**, **HUGO JR.** and **CAROL**; brothers **RICARDO** and **SERAPIO**; grandchildren, great grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the GOOD SHEPHERD MEMORIAL HOMES, CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, PAMPANGA.

INTERMENT will be on Saturday, February 15, 2003 at 9:00 in the morning at the GOOD SHEPHERD MEMORIAL PARK, City of San Fernando, Pampanga.

CARIDAD CAMACHO ESPIRITU

Now peacefully rests in the infinite Grace and Goodness of the Lord on the 5th day of February 2003.

Her loving children Manuel and Nora, Tessie and Peng, Antonio (†) and Ester, Dewey, Winston and Belen; grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels (St. Louise Chapel), Dr. A. Santos Avenue (Sucat Road), Parañaque City.

Interment will be on Thursday, February 13, 2003 at Loyola Memorial Park, Parañaque City after the 10:00 a.m. Holy Mass at the Parish Church of the Resurrection, Phase I, BF Homes. Parañaque City

---

EMILIANO VIRAY SANTOS, SR.

Died January 27, 2003

Interred last February 1, 2003 in Sta. Rosa, Laguna

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REQUIEMS
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I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.
John 14:6

The Board of Directors, Management and Staff of
Rural Bank of San Ildefonso, Inc.
Condole the family of

FERNANDO A. ORTIZ

Chairman/President/General Manager

Who passed away in the Grace of our Lord on February 8, 2003 at the age of 77.

His loving wife **GLORIA**; children **DON & EVELYN, MARIETTA & DIOMEDES, FERNANDO JR. & GRACE, RAMON & JACKIE**; grandchildren **ANGEL & ARLENE, FERNANDO III & LISA, ALLAN & WANDA, ARVIN & CECILE, ARIEL & IRIS, MABELLE, IRENE & SEAN, TINA, MICHAEL, GINO, AMANDA, JEFFREY & CLAIRE, MIKO, PAOLO, RANDOLPH, ELISSE, VINCENT**; great grandchildren **KATRINA, SHAYANNE, SAVANA, JESSICA, JUSTIN, SABRINA, JADE**; brothers and sisters, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish Church, Project 6, Quezon City.

Cremation will be on Friday, February 14, 2003 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Crematorium, Marikina City after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

RAUL "LUY KIM THONG" TAN

OF DAVAO CITY

PEACEFULLY JOINED OUR CREATOR ON FEBRUARY 08, 2003 AT THE AGE OF 73.

HE WILL BE MOST MISSED BY HIS BELOVED WIFE, **CARMEN "WEE SIOK DAN"**; CHILDREN **GILBERT & MARILOU, JIMMY, WILSON & NANCY, SUSAN, MICHAEL & MA. VICTORIA, RICHARD & MARITESS, WINSTON & CORINNE, JEFFERSON & JENNIFER**; GRANDCHILDREN **ALDRICK, BREINARD, CYRIL, DIANNE MAE, CHERIELYN JANE, CLARENCE JOHN, CEDRIC JOHNSON, MARCHAEL KEITH, MICHAELA FAE, MIKE EUGENE, MARK RUPERT, RUSCHIV, CURT WINDRICK, WYNELLE CLAIRE, WYNNE CAIRA, WYLIAN CATE, JERICHO JAKE, JOSHUA JOAQUIN**; SISTERS, BROTHERS-IN-LAW, SISTERS-IN-LAW, NEPHEWS, NIECES, RELATIVES AND FRIENDS AND BY ALL OF US WHO WERE GIVEN THE GRACE TO KNOW AND LOVE HIM REQUEST THE PIOUS READER TO PRAY FOR THE ETERNAL REPOSE OF HIS SOUL.

HIS REMAINS LIE IN STATE AT COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL PARLOR, J. CAMUS ST., DAVAO CITY. INTERMENT WILL BE ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2003 AT 9:00 A.M. AT DAVAO MEMORIAL PARK, MATINA, DAVAO CITY.

RICARDO GUERRERO ALMEDA

of United Hills Village, Parañaque & former Sales Manager of AMSPEC (Mongol)

Peacefully joined his Creator on February 7, 2003 at the age of 72.

His beloved wife **Charing**; children **Raymond**, **Rene** and **Chit**, **Ricky** and **Christine**, **Gina** and **Hector**; grandchildren **Charlyn**, **Richard**, **Carmeli** and **Roselin**; brother, sisters, in-laws, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Agoncillo Chapel of La Funeraria Paz-Sucat inside the Manila Memorial Park.

Interment will be on Thursday, February 13, after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

JOSE B. ALONSO

Died on February 10, 2003 at the age of 88.

His loving children **Jose Jr.**, **Aurora**, **Gloria**, **Elvira**, **Rosali**, **Ward Imelda & Ricky**; children-in-law **Corazon**, **Rolando**, **Eliseo**, **Butch**; grandchildren and other relatives mourn his passing and wish him eternal rest.

His body lies in state at Chapel F of Loyola Memorial Chapels in Guadalupe, Makati City.

Cremation will be on Thursday, February 13, 2003 at 12 noon after the 10:00 a.m. Mass at Loyola Crematorium, Makati.

"And... I will dwell in the House of the Lord... Forever.

LUZ NAVARRO BARON

widow of the late Willie M. Baron
Peacefully joined her Creator on February 10, 2003
at the age of 80.

She is survived by her children **JING & AIMEE, MIMO & SONY, REGGIE & NIDA, CORITO & JOEY GARCIA, BOY & CHAI, LINO, LEN & CHITO SALANGSANG**; sister **NENITA N. BALANE**; grandchildren, relatives & friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at OUR LADY OF SORROW CHURCH, F.B. Harisson St., Pasay City.

Interment will be on Thursday, February 13, 2003
at the Heritage Memorial Park, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig,
Metro Manila after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

Iraq war to slow East Asia growth in '03–ADB

By Doris C. Dumlao

EAST ASIAN economies grew a robust 6.1 percent in 2002 but face tougher times from higher oil prices this year if a war in Iraq drags on, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) said on Monday.

The Manila-based institution said the region bounced back reasonably well from a slowdown in 2001 but the ADB expected growth to moderate this year in Singapore, South Korea, Malaysia and Indonesia.

For the Philippines, ADB expects growth to slow to 3.9 percent this year from the five-year high of 4.6 percent posted in 2002, which was a shade above its original forecast of 3.8 percent.

The growth projection, however, was the third lowest in the region, next to Singapore's 3.8 percent and Indonesia's 3.6 percent.

The projections were made by London-based Consensus Economics, which collates forecasts made by about 200 economic and financial forecasters from over 70 countries. The report was contained in the latest Asia Economic Monitor released by the ADB yesterday.

The ADB report noted that private economists had scaled back their January forecast of the region's overall expansion in 2003 to an average 5.6 percent from 5.9 percent in October but said it saw "no major domestic risks on the horizon that could significantly upset the economic outlook for East Asia."

The ADB noted that the global economic turnaround might not happen until the latter part of this year, although the region was expected to grow by 6 percent in 2004.

The ADB added that if tensions in the Middle East escalate into a war, the impact would depend on its scale and duration, the report said.

A short military operation could lead to only a temporary spike in oil prices, while a long drawn-out war would have a more adverse impact on the global economy and East Asia's growth prospects.

The Philippines' gross domestic product—which refers to the total amount of goods and services produced by the domestic economy—was forecast to grow by 4.2 percent next year.

Other countries, however, are expected to fare better than the Philippines: 5 percent for Cambodia; 7.5 percent for the People's Republic of China; 5 percent for Korea; 5.8 percent for Laos; 4.7 percent for Malaysia; 4.1 percent for Thailand and 6.7 percent for Vietnam.

"The Philippines is constrained in using fiscal expansion to spur growth, given the overshooting of the fiscal deficits and the negative market sentiment that it has evoked," the ADB report said. *With a report from Reuters*

Growth Projections for East Asia

	2001	2002	2003 (old)	2003 (new)	2004
East Asia	4.3	6.1	5.9	5.6	6.0
East (exl)China	2.4	4.9	4.9	4.5	4.9
Brunei	1.5	4.1	-	-	-
Cambodia	6.3	4.5	6.0	5.0	6.0
Indonesia	3.3	3.5	4.0	3.6	4.1
South Korea	3.0	6.2	5.6	5.0	5.4
Laos	5.7	5.8	5.8	5.8	n/a
Malaysia	0.4	4.0	5.2	4.7	5.4
Philippines	3.2	4.6	3.8	3.9	4.2
Singapore	-2.0	2.2	4.7	3.8	4.9
Thailand	1.8	4.9	4.0	4.1	4.4
Vietnam	5.8	6.3	6.4	6.7	7.0

SOURCE : Asian Development Bank

NHA to float P5B in bonds

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE NATIONAL Housing Authority plans to float P5 billion worth of five-year zero-coupon bonds to finance the resettlement of squatters that have impeded the construction of the North and South railways.

Daniel Olan, consultant to NHA assistant general manager Joseph Peter Sison, disclosed that as many as 37,000 families are squatting on land along the tracks of the North and South railways, thus, making it difficult to speed up the completion of the multi-billion-peso projects.

Olan said part of the proceeds would be used to immediately resettle at least 1,000 families squatting on land near the tracks in Caloocan and Malabon. These families would be given service lots and, in some cases, housing loans.

The government housing agency has appointed state-owned Development Bank of the Philippines as issue manager.

Olan said that the NHA planned to apply for either a sovereign guarantee or a guarantee from the Home Guarantee Corp. to make the bonds more attractive to investors.

5 foreign trading firms eye NSC control

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

AT LEAST five foreign trading firms have expressed interest in bidding for control of National Steel Corp. after the steel giant's Malaysian owners and creditors put into effect a debt-restructuring program.

Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II identified the interested investors as Minmetals Zhejiang International Trading Co. Ltd. and China international Iron and Steel Investments Corp. (China); Bhicknapahari group of France; Bel Trade Investment Holdings Ltd. of Hong Kong; and Tael Capital of London.

Roxas said the Department of Trade and Industry, which mediated the restructuring agreement between Malaysia's debt rehabilitation agency Pengurusan Danaharta Nasional Bhd. and the local creditor banks led by Philippine National Bank, has started soliciting proposals for the international bidding of NSC.

Roxas said NSC has again become an attractive investment especially with the formation of a special purpose vehicle (SPV) that would facilitate the transfer and operation of NSC's assets.

Roxas explained that the SPV would assume the liabilities of the creditor-shareholders and lease out or dispose the plant assets as an integrated facility.

He hinted that a new SPV might be incorporated to hold all of NSC's assets should foreign firms (which are not allowed to own land in the Philippines) take over the Iligan factory which has been closed since November 1999 due to mounting debt expenses and inability to compete with cheap Russian imports.

Danaharta had agreed to reduce its stake in NSC from 82.5 percent to 20 percent in exchange for a write-off of P16 billion of its outstanding obligation of P18 billion.

NSC owes roughly P18 billion to 14 Philippine banks and financial institutions such as Philippine National Bank, Allied Banking Corp., Land Bank of the Philippines, United Overseas Bank Philippines, Global Banking Corp., Bank of Commerce, China Banking Corp., Equitable-PCIBank, Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., Traders Royal Bank, United Coconut Planters Bank, Urban Bank, Credit Agricole Indosuez and Wise Citco.

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Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

The war of the diets

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

FOR THE LAST couple of years, the nutrition field has been a war zone. Sarcastic barbs have been exchanged left and right, and leading diet gurus are practically at each other's throats. If you read the 139-page transcript of "The Great Nutrition Debate" held in Washington two years ago, you'd realize how bitter and acrimonious the debate had become about whose diet was the best.

The debate was organized by the United States Department of Agriculture

THE WAR/ C3

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Sana'y wala ng Wakas
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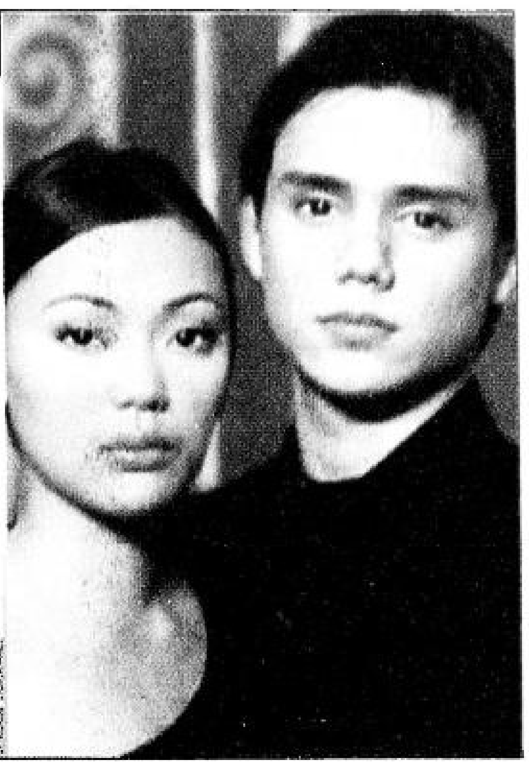

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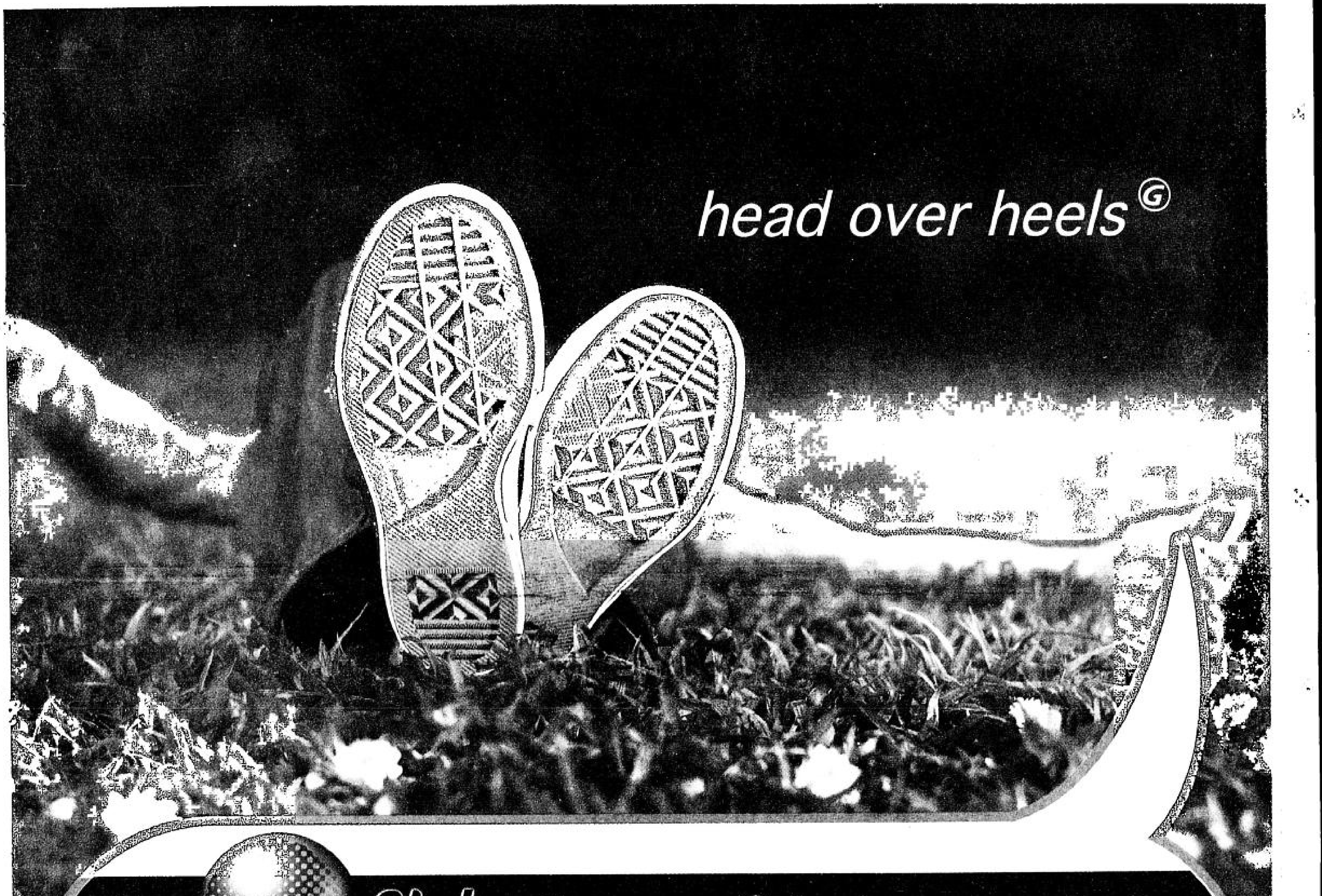
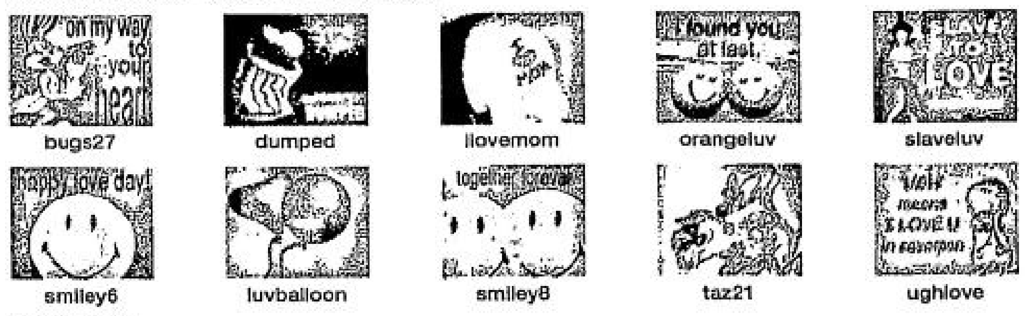


head over heels

myGlobe tones&icons

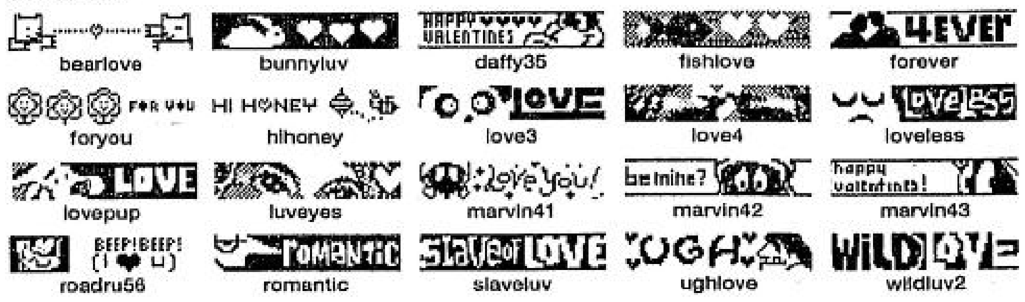
Sweep him off his feet with these Valentine picks!

COLORED WALLPAPER



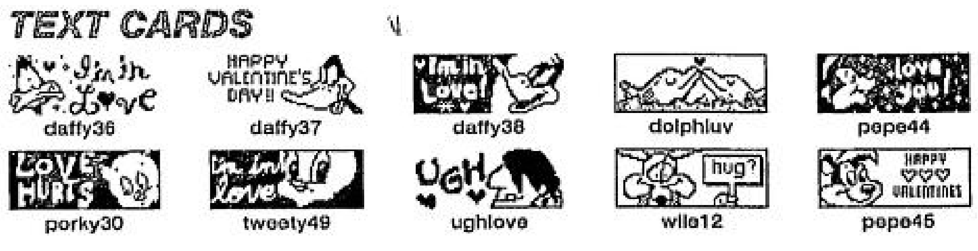
on my way to your heart
bugs27
dumped
ilovemom
I found you at last
orangeluv
LOVE
slaveluv
happy love day!
smiley6
luvballoon
together forever
smiley8
taz21
ughlove

ICONS



bearlove
bunnyluv
HAPPY VALENTINES
daffy35
fishlove
4EVER
forever
FOR YOU
foryou
HI HONEY
hihoney
LOVE
love3
love4
LOVELESS
loveless
LOVE
lovepup
luveyes
love you!
marvin41
be mine?
marvin42
happy valentines!
marvin43
BEEP!BEEP! (I ♥ U)
roadru56
ROMANTIC
romantic
SLAVE OF LOVE
slaveluv
UGH
ughlove
WILD LOVE
wildluv2

TEXT CARDS



I'm in Love
daffy36
HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!!
daffy37
I'm in Love!
daffy38
dolphluv
love you!
pepe44
LOVE HURTS
porky30
I'm in love
tweety49
UGH
ughlove
hug?
wile12
HAPPY VALENTINES
pepe45

TONES

SONG TITLE	KEYWORD	ARTIST
ANGEL OF MINE	angelof	MONICA
BACK AT ONE	backat1	BRIAN McKNIGHT
IS IT OKAY IF I CALL YOU MINE	calumine	PAUL McCRANE
I NEED YOU	ineedyou	LEANNE RHYMES
IT MIGHT BE YOU	mightbu	STEPHEN BISHOP
ONLY HOPE	onlyhope	MANDY MOORE
THANK YOU	thankyou	DIDO
THERE YOU'LL BE	thereyou	FAITH HILL
THIS I PROMISE YOU	thisipro	*NSYNC
I TURN TO YOU	turntoyu	CHRISTINA AGUILERA

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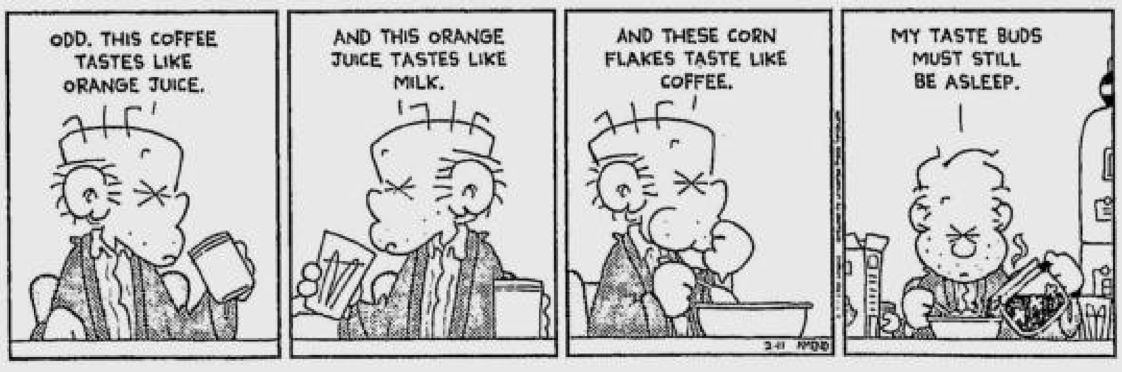
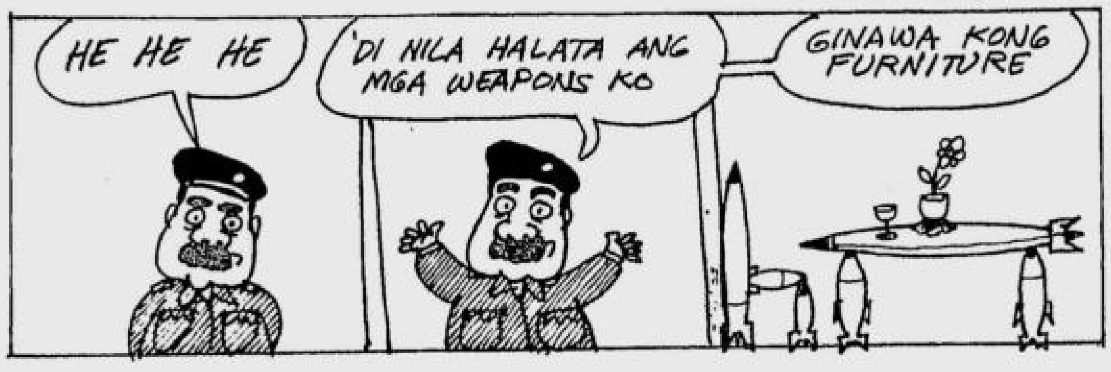
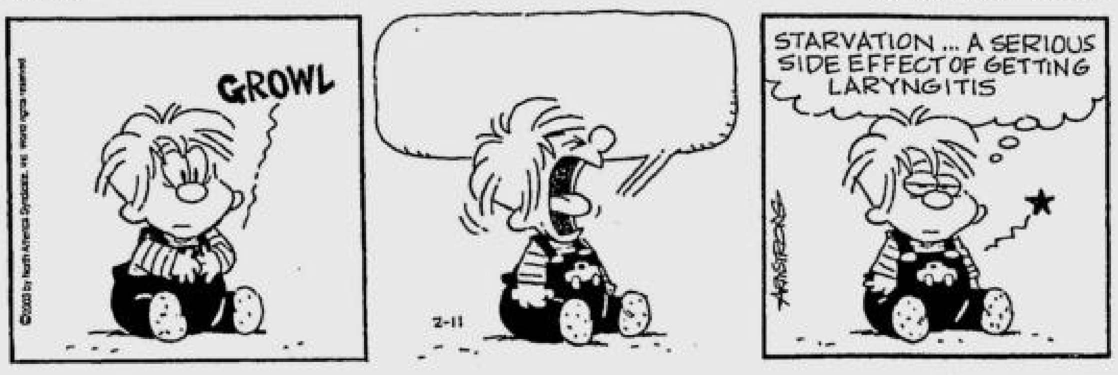

ODD. THIS COFFEE TASTES LIKE ORANGE JUICE.
AND THIS ORANGE JUICE TASTES LIKE MILK.
AND THESE CORN FLAKES TASTE LIKE COFFEE.
MY TASTE BUDS MUST STILL BE ASLEEP.

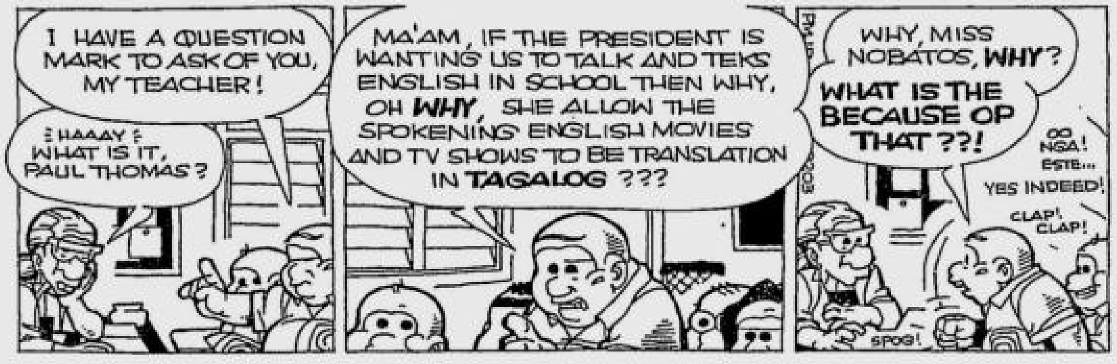
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


HE HE HE
'DI NILA HALATA ANG MGA WEAPONS KO
GINAWA KONG FURNITURE

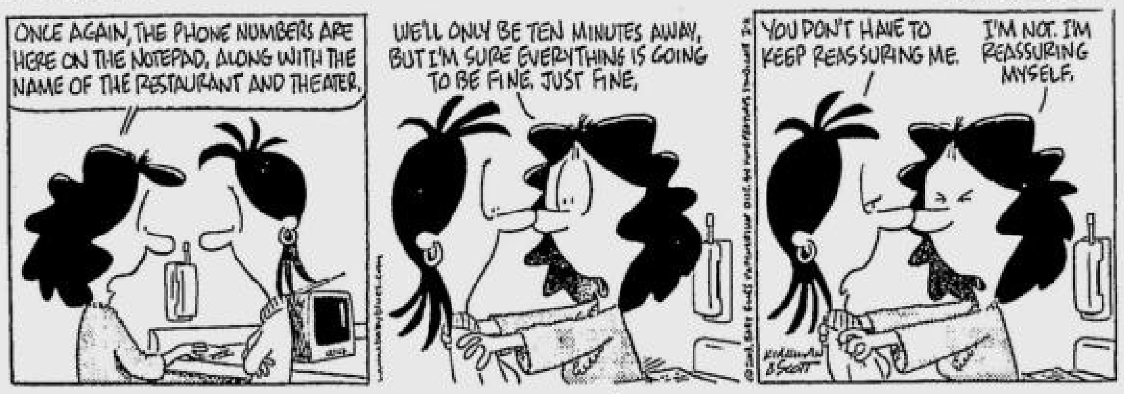
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


GROWL
STARVATION ... A SERIOUS SIDE EFFECT OF GETTING LARYNGITIS

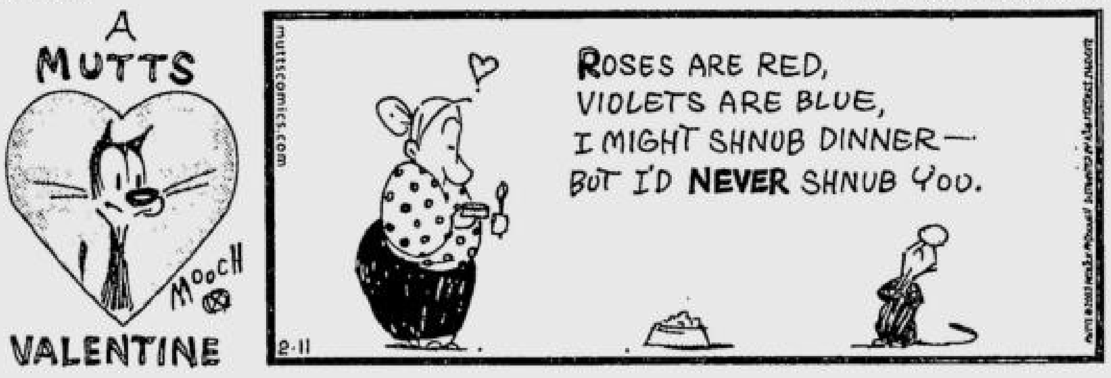
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


I HAVE A QUESTION MARK TO ASK OF YOU, MY TEACHER!
¡HAAAY! WHAT IS IT, PAUL THOMAS?
MA'AM, IF THE PRESIDENT IS WANTING US TO TALK AND TEKS ENGLISH IN SCHOOL THEN WHY, OH WHY, SHE ALLOW THE SPOKENING ENGLISH MOVIES AND TV SHOWS TO BE TRANSLATION IN TAGALOG ???
WHY, MISS NOBATOS, WHY?
WHAT IS THE BECAUSE OP THAT??!
OO NGA! ESTE...
YES INDEED!
CLAP! CLAP!
SPOG!

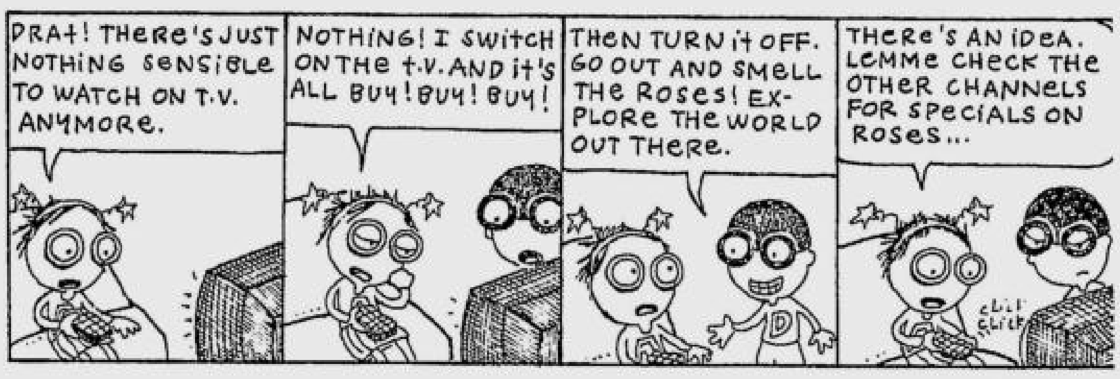
BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


ONCE AGAIN, THE PHONE NUMBERS ARE HERE ON THE NOTEPAD, ALONG WITH THE NAME OF THE RESTAURANT AND THEATER.
WE'LL ONLY BE TEN MINUTES AWAY, BUT I'M SURE EVERYTHING IS GOING TO BE FINE. JUST FINE.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO KEEP REASSURING ME.
I'M NOT. I'M REASSURING MYSELF.

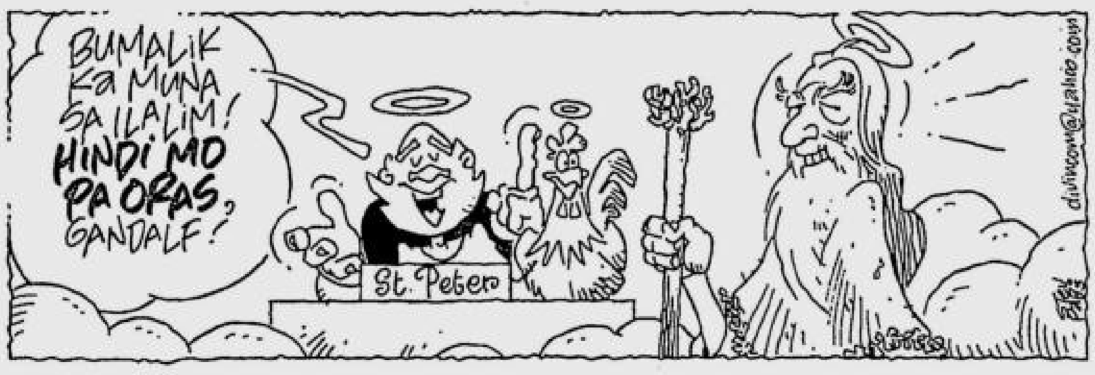
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


A MUTTS VALENTINE
MOOCH
ROSES ARE RED, VIOLETS ARE BLUE, I MIGHT SHNUB DINNER— BUT I'D NEVER SHNUB YOU.
muttscomics.com

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


DRAT! THERE'S JUST NOTHING SENSIBLE TO WATCH ON T.V. ANYMORE.
NOTHING! I SWITCH ON THE T.V. AND IT'S ALL BUY! BUY! BUY!
THEN TURN IT OFF. GO OUT AND SMELL THE ROSES! EXPLORE THE WORLD OUT THERE.
THERE'S AN IDEA. LEMME CHECK THE OTHER CHANNELS FOR SPECIALS ON ROSES...
CLICK CLICK

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS


BUMALIK KA MUNA SA ILALIM! HINDI MO PA ORAS, GANDALF!
St. Peter
divinecom@yahoo.com

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Jennifer Aniston, Sheryl Crow, Burt Reynolds, Mike Shinoda

Happy Birthday: You've got what it takes this year to be successful. You will feel far more secure about your personal life and you'll not stand back just waiting for things to happen. Prepare to take on new friends, projects and concerns. Your numbers are 7, 12, 16, 29, 33, 42

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You can discover all sorts of new information if you are open to discuss topics that you may have shied away from in the past. Sign up for a seminar or conference that bring you greater financial understanding.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Your tendency will be to take on more than you can handle today, so decide what is most important to you and focus on that alone.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You'll be in a romantic mood. Make plans that will allow you to express your intentions. Take a deep breath, slow down and savor this exciting day.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Refrain from telling others how to do things, especially a higher-up. Trouble will follow secret activity. You may not get your facts correct today.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You'll have enough finesse to open any door that interests you today. You have a good understanding of what's required and what will work, and your leadership ability will be recognized.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): See and try new things. Take a short trip, but make sure that you don't spend more than your budget will allow. Consider joining a group that deals with self-awareness.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Someone you know is withholding information. Investigate. Sudden changes regarding a partnership are likely.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Look out for your own interests, especially if any of these matters are personal or of a legal nature. You will learn a lot about yourself from the experience.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Don't let confusion get the better of you. Someone is probably sending you double signals, so ask him or her what's up. It may be time to be open and honest about your feelings.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Don't let frustration bog you down. If things aren't moving along according to your plans, you may want to readjust your game plan. Losses are evident if you get involved in a joint venture.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You've been hiding out too much lately and it's time to interact with people from all walks of life. You will learn some interesting facts today that are sure to help you make positive decisions in the future.

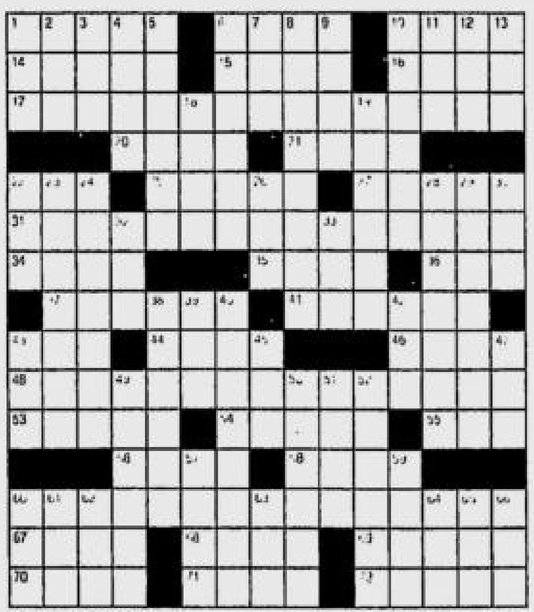
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Don't let what others do annoy you. Changes are likely to unnerve you, but if you are accepting, you will find out that the situation is not as bad as you had first thought.

Birthday Baby: You will have an active mind and a creative way of presenting yourself. You will be versatile, intelligent and curious.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Longs demonstratively
6 Circle segments
10 Down Under greeting
14 Lucky people?
15 Car or machine starter
16 Yesteryear
17 Mrs. Gore's footwear?
20 Blackthorn
21 Important times
22 Frequently, in poems
25 Flower holders
27 Greedy swallows
31 Esiason's undies?
34 Globes
35 Musical group
36 Old hand
37 Stitches loosely
41 Freed from a habit
43 Chest muscle, for short
44 "Sopranos" star Falco
46 "Dies __"
48 Buddy's coats?
53 __ du seigneur
54 Money lending
55 Balmoral Castle's river
56 Mets' park
58 Slangy denial
60 Tony's undies?
67 Keystone State port
68 Stout's Wolfe
69 In the dark
70 Beatty and Buntline
71 Hubbubs
72 Flower of Paris?

DOWN
1 Racetrack stop
2 Jackie's number two
3 Small bite
4 Recipe amts.
5 Put away for later
6 Set a tax
7 "Treasure Island" auth.
8 Side dish
9 Recipe direction
10 Plasterboard material
11 Jane or John
12 LAX info letters
13 Positive reply
18 Bellow
19 Buddhist shrine
22 Seller's $ equivocation
23 Refrain from
24 "__ Road"
26 Wane
28 Jimmied
29 Happen earlier
30 Mach+ jet
32 Written writings: abbr.
33 Half and half?
38 Acquire molars
39 Summer hrs. in NYC
40 Located
42 Beat follower?
43 Grad. degree
45 19th of 26
47 Compass dir.
49 Hershey's candies
50 American finches
51 End of a buck?
52 Mediterranean island
57 Peak in Sicily
59 Anglo-Saxon slave
60 Cave dwelling
61 Mine find
62 Make free (of)
63 Sell-out letters
64 Actor Wallach
65 Soft metal
66 Sault __ Marie



By Bruce Venzke
Madison, WI
2/11/03

Monday's Puzzle Solved

A	P	E	D	■	B	E	D	S	■	S	H	R	E	W
T	I	L	E	■	A	L	O	E	■	T	A	U	P	E
R	E	A	M	■	R	I	O	T	■	E	U	B	I	E
A	R	N	O	L	D	O	R	S	E	L	L	E	C	K
■	■	■	C	O	O	T	■	■	A	L	E	■	■	■
A	R	A	R	A	T	■	C	A	T	A	R	A	C	T
S	A	D	A	T	■	M	A	L	E	■	■	L	O	O
S	M	O	T	H	E	R	S	O	R	C	L	A	R	K
E	B	B	■	■	L	E	T	T	■	R	A	N	G	E
T	O	E	H	O	L	D	S	■	T	O	C	S	I	N
■	■	■	O	R	E	■	■	S	H	O	O	■	■	■
H	A	M	L	I	N	O	R	C	O	N	N	I	C	K
E	V	A	D	E	■	L	I	A	R	■	I	D	L	E
M	E	L	O	N	■	E	S	P	N	■	S	E	A	R
P	R	I	N	T	■	S	E	E	S	■	M	A	W	R

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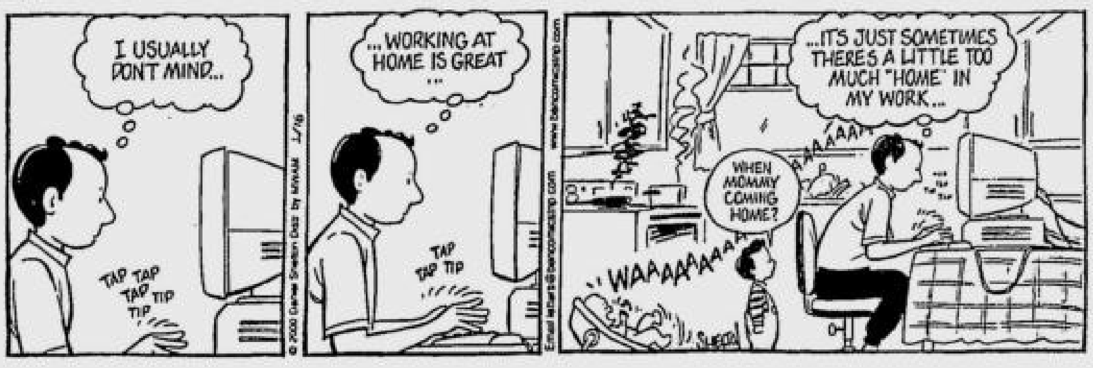
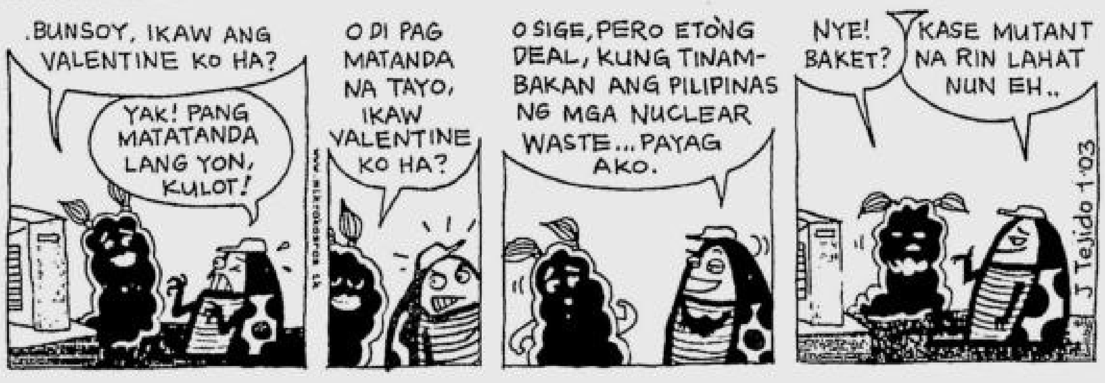
2/11/03

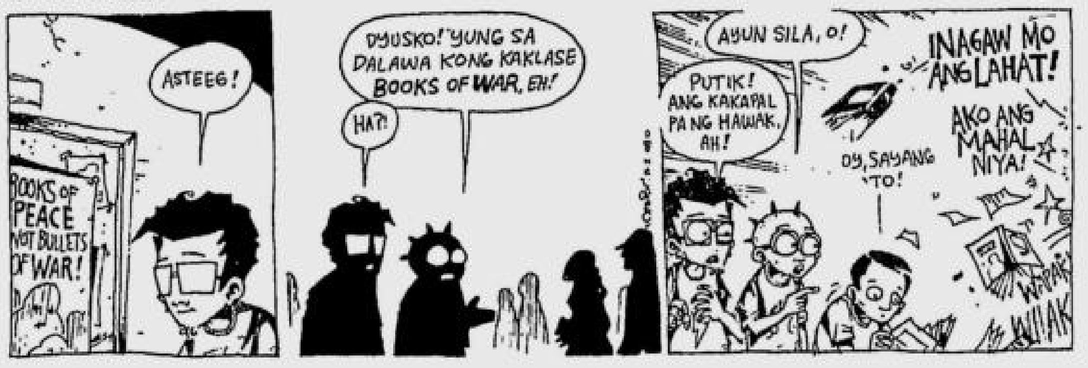
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


I USUALLY DONT MIND...
TAP TAP TAP TIP TIP
...WORKING AT HOME IS GREAT ...
TAP TAP TIP
...IT'S JUST SOMETIMES THERES A LITTLE TOO MUCH "HOME" IN MY WORK...
WHEN MOMMY COMING HOME?
WAAAAAAAAA
AAAAAAAH

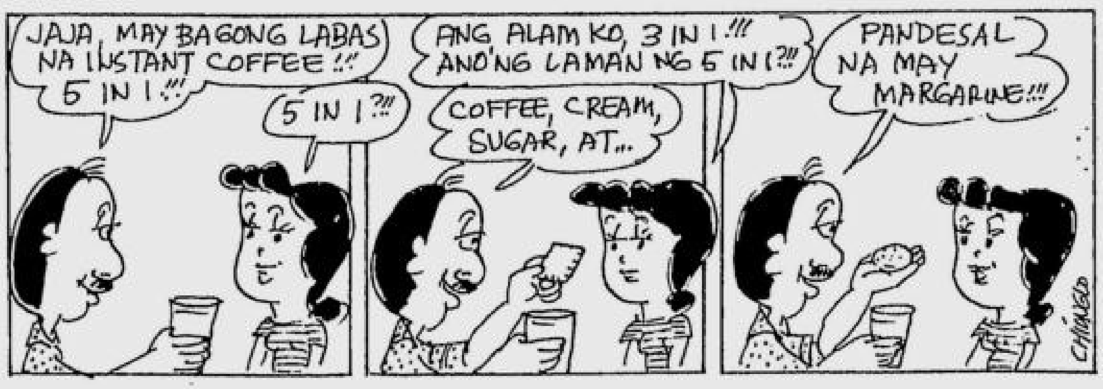
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


BUNSOY, IKAW ANG VALENTINE KO HA?
YAK! PANG MATATANDA LANG YON, KULOT!
O DI PAG MATANDA NA TAYO, IKAW VALENTINE KO HA?
O SIGE, PERO ETONG DEAL, KUNG TINAMBAKAN ANG PILIPINAS NG MGA NUCLEAR WASTE... PAYAG AKO.
NYE! BAKET?
KASE MUTANT NA RIN LAHAT NUN EH..
J Tejido 1'03

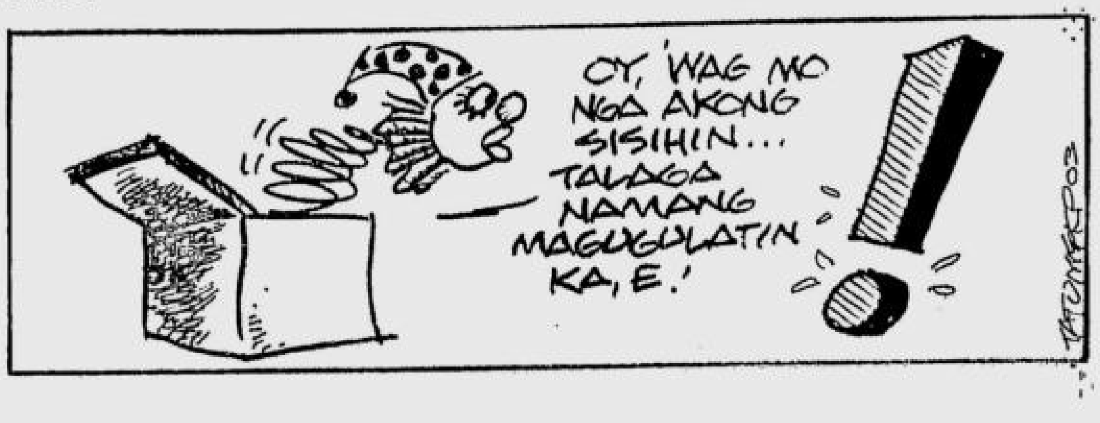
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


ASTEEG!
BOOKS OF PEACE NOT BULLETS OF WAR!
DYUSKO! YUNG SA DALAWA KONG KAKLASE BOOKS OF WAR, EH!
HA?!
AYUN SILA, O!
PUTIK! ANG KAKAPAL PA NG HAWAK, AH!
INAGAW MO ANG LAHAT!
AKO ANG MAHAL NIYA!
OY, SAYANG 'TO!
WAPAK! WAAK!

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JAJA, MAY BAGONG LABAS NA INSTANT COFFEE!!! 5 IN 1!!!
5 IN 1?!!
ANG ALAM KO, 3 IN 1!!! ANO'NG LAMAN NG 5 IN 1?!!
COFFEE, CREAM, SUGAR, AT...
PANDESAL NA MAY MARGARINE!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


OY, 'WAG MO NGA AKONG SISIHIN... TALAGA NAMANG MAGUGULATIN KA, E.'
TATUM PAPU 03

The war of the diets

HELP
DIETS
Diets
DIETS
DIETS
DIET
DIET
Diets
StephB.
ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

The hapless public is more confused than ever about what diet is most effective for weight loss and health

From page C1

in response to the alarming rise in obesity levels in the US in the last two decades, and the growing confusion among consumers about which diet to follow to lose weight and have better health.

The main antagonists were Dr. Robert Atkins (high protein/fat, low carbohydrate) and Dr. Dean Ornish (low protein/fat, high carbohydrate), while the other panelists reflected dietary views in-between the two extremes.

The discussion started out businesslike and professional but eventually disintegrated into snipes and taunts volleyed back and forth between the panelists, punctuated by applause from the audience representing varying support groups.

Red flag to a bull

If you read the transcripts, you would probably get a headache like I did. Each panelist presented scientific proof, cited valid sources, and proclaimed success stories, which all sounded very convincing until you read the next presentation, whereupon the whole process of being convinced started again. My opinion after reading all seven presentations was that there was some truth in each of the experts' diet approaches, and I wouldn't be surprised if in the future, the answer to which diet was correct would be a combination of their beliefs.

Now if you thought the discussions in The Great Debate were nasty, it was nothing compared to what happened when science writer Gary Taubes published his controversial article, "What if it's all been a big fat lie?" last July in The New York Times Magazine. The article praised the Atkins diet and claimed, "Influential researchers are beginning to embrace the medical heresy that maybe Dr. Atkins was right."

Taubes quoted leading obesity experts as admitting that they were wrong about low-fat diets and others as agreeing with Atkins' theory that carbohydrates made people fat.

The article's impact was akin to waving a red flag at a very angry bull. It wasn't long before fur flew and blood was drawn when the very researchers that Taubes interviewed cried foul. They accused him of twisting their words and of disregarding the voluminous research material they sent him explaining their positions.

Nutritionist Bonnie Liebmann of the Nutrition Action Health Letter was one of many writers who talked to the incensed researchers to get the real score. Professor John Farquhar of Stanford University said, "I was greatly offended at how Gary Taubes tricked us all into coming across as supporters of the Atkins diet."

Gerald Reaven, another Stanford University researcher, complained, "The article is incredibly misleading. My quote was correct, but the context suggested that I support eating saturated fat. I was horrified."

Harvard University's Walter Willet protested, "I certainly don't recommend it (the Atkins diet). And I told Taubes several times that red meat is associated with a higher risk of colon and possibly prostate cancer, but he left that out."

The article sent Atkins' "Diet Revolution" book to the top of the charts (from No. 5 to No. 1 in the Time's bestseller list and from No. 178 to No. 5 on Amazon.com, according to the Washington Post). Additionally, it garnered for Taubes a $700,000 advance on a book deal with publisher Alfred Knopf.

Confusing advice

The Great Debate and Taubes' article are just two of the bigger examples of numerous debates and articles that have pitted one diet expert against another.

In the middle of all these opposing scientific arrows, is the hapless public who is more confused than ever about what diet is the most effective for weight loss and health.

And who wouldn't be confused? Fit for Life says never to combine protein and starch while In the Zone says you should eat protein and starch at every meal. The Atkins Diet says saturated fat is safe for your heart while The Ornish Diet and many others claim that kind of fat can give you a heart attack. Sugar Busters says refined sugar is practically a poison while Weight Watchers says sugar is okay as long as it's eaten in moderation.

Other contradictory diet advice are things like "eat according to your blood type," "eat anything you want as long as it is before six o'clock," "eat only cabbage soup," "eat only raw food," etc.

In the 15 years that I have been a fitness professional, I have met people who have lost weight on all kinds of diets and diet approaches, even the craziest-sounding ones like eating food that is slightly spoiled. It seems like any diet will make you lose weight if the calories are low enough. The questions that need to be asked are: Will the diet help you maintain your weight loss and will the diet be healthy for you in the long term?

The ill-effects of a particular diet will not be seen in a few weeks or even a couple of years. This is what bothers many scientists in the field of obesity and nutrition. It explains partly why there is so much passion and animosity among experts. For sure, ego and self-righteousness also play a part but, by and large, no ethical scientist would want to put the public's health at risk by recommending a diet that does not have solid scientific proof to back it.

The problem is that the study of human physiology is like figuring out a jigsaw puzzle that keeps changing. Just when you think you have all the pieces, the puzzle produces new holes that need to be filled up. Not only are there many mysteries still to be solved in the way the human body works but human beings, unlike animals, are not easy subjects to study.

As Taubes points out in his article, to really investigate the long-term effects of a diet, people would have to be confined and force-fed for many years. Additionally, every physical movement they make would have to be documented.

Unethical

This is unlikely to happen and even if you could get people to voluntarily agree to such an experiment, it would be unethical because scientists would be playing God with the health of their study participants. Plus, a highly controlled experiment like this would probably still have little bearing on real life because people invent their own versions of diets they read about and are notorious for being in denial of how much they really eat.

Thus, scientists are left with using short-term studies wherein they try to control eating and exercise conditions as best they can or they turn to epidemiology, the science of studying people's habits.

In an epidemiological or observational study, scientists can ask participants about their eating and exercise habits 10 years ago and see the effects on their health today, or they can ask about their habits now and check up on the participants 10 years later to find out what effects their lifestyle had on their health. Observational studies also look at whole populations and figure out the effects their ethnic diet has had on their health as a country.

A well-designed study will include as many people as it can from different ethnic groups, backgrounds, ages and gender. It should also cancel out the effects of other factors on the health outcome that the study is investigating; otherwise, it is difficult to say with certainty the cause and effect.

For example, there is an association between red meat and certain types of cancer, but is it the meat itself that causes cancer? It could be the fat in the meat, the way the meat is cooked, the near absence of fruits, vegetables and whole grains in a meat eaters' diet, or it could be habits like smoking and alcohol consumption, which are associated with people who eat a lot of meat. Or it could be a combination of any of these factors.

No joking matter

The danger of making simple conclusions is underscored by the following joke sent to me via The Nutrition Focus E-Letter: The Japanese eat very little fat and suffer fewer heart attacks than the British or Americans. The French eat a lot of fat and also suffer fewer heart attacks than the British or Americans. The Japanese drink very little red wine and suffer fewer heart attacks than the British or Americans. The Italians drink large amounts of red wine and also suffer fewer heart attacks than the British or Americans. Conclusion: Eat and drink what you like. What kills you is speaking English.

The disharmony among diet scientists is detrimental to a public that is already confused and skeptical. However, good things come out of bad situations and because of the heated debates and articles, bigger and better designed studies are now being launched financed by US government agencies like the National Institute of Health, which has given US$2.5 million to a group of scientists to study the Atkins diet for five years. The N.I.H is also financing other studies to do a comparison of popular diets. In the end, this can only be beneficial for all people who need to know the truth about how to maintain their weight for good health.

Next week: Who or what is to blame for the rise in obesity levels.

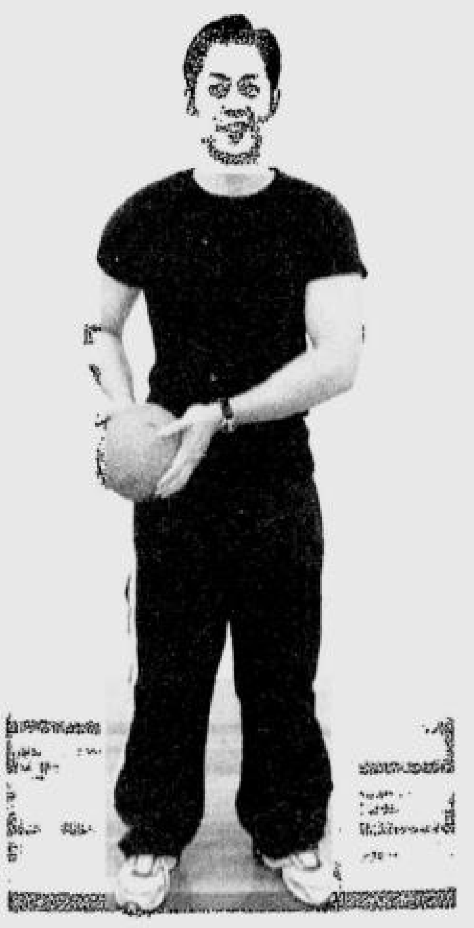
The Association of Fitness Professionals of the Philippines (AFPP) will hold a fitness seminar on Feb. 22 at the University of the Philippines, Diliman. Topics will be "Basic Gym Programming," "Capoeira," "Cardio Kung Fu," "Cardio Striptease" and "Stability Ball Training." Call or text Ivy Abuel at 850-7647 or 0917-518-1202.

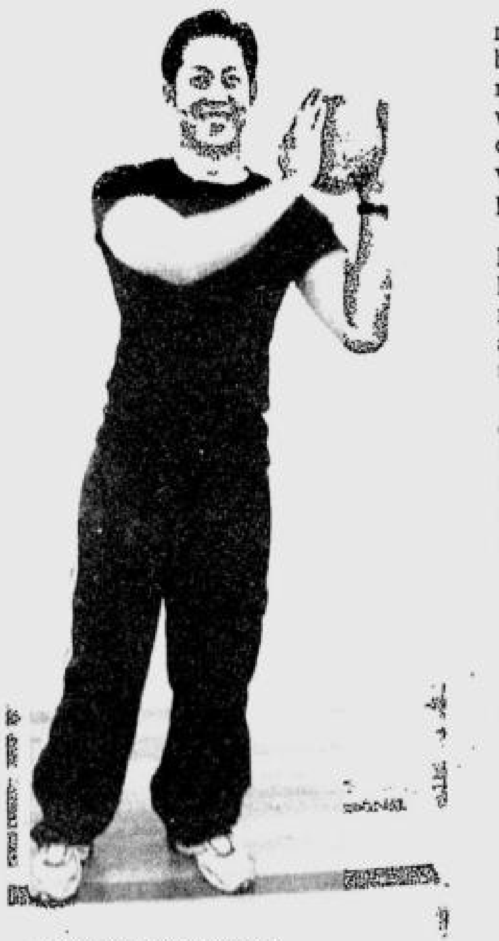
Watch "In Fitness & In Health" from Mondays to Fridays on Studio 23 (Channel 23) at 6-6:30 a.m. and on Net25 at 6-6:30 a.m.

For questions and past articles and exercises, go to www.tinajuanfitness.com.

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Reverse wood chop with medicine ball





STRENGTHENS the trunk muscles (abs and lower back) and front of the shoulders.

Equipment

Medicine ball (weighing 4 to 8 pounds); Options: rubber ball, dumbbell

Exercise technique

1. Stand with feet about shoulder width apart, medicine ball at left hip, body weight shifted over the left leg.

2. Move the ball diagonally from your left hip to your right shoulder while simultaneously shifting body weight over to the right leg.

3. After desired number of repetitions, repeat on other side.

Performance tips

1. A more advanced variation of the exercise is to move the ball in a diagonal pattern with straight arms.

2. Be sure to shift weight from one leg to the other as you transfer the ball from down to up, otherwise you won't work the abs as effectively.

3. In the beginning, move slowly without any sudden moves. As you become more advanced, you can move more strongly (but with control) to create more movement to challenge your core muscles.

Repetitions

10 repetitions per side.

Human awareness expanding beyond physical universe

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

THE ACTIVITIES and influences of the unseen world are all around us, but they are for the most part ignored or explained away by the scientific mind or rationalist as mere imagination, coincidence, or worse, as superstition. But as human consciousness or awareness expands, we tend to see more than just the physical universe.

The advent of the so-called "Age of Enlightenment," beginning with the Renaissance period in the 16th century, paved the way for the industrial and scientific revolutions of the 17th to the 19th centuries.

These were the eras when people questioned the cherished assumptions of religion in the western world and the absolute authority of the Church over human affairs. This period also saw the crumbling of the monarchy in many European countries and the rise of democratic ideas and institutions begun by the ancient Greeks more than 2,500 years ago.

The 17th century French philosopher, Rene Descartes, dominated much of western thinking with his emphasis on reason and the use of the "methodic doubt" as the only infallible instrument to arrive at the truth. His often quoted dictum, "Cogito, ergo sum" ("I think, therefore I am"), has become the virtual battle cry of every rationalist. The rise of Western science owes much to the Cartesian doctrine.

I have no quarrel with science, in the same way that I have no quarrel with the fundamental tenets of any religion. As a tool or technique for discovering the truth or validity of any physical phenomenon, the scientific method is perfect. It cannot be improved upon.

Just physical reality

But we must always bear in mind that science, from its very inception, was meant to investigate, understand or validate only physical reality. It was never intended to explain supernatural or non-maternal phenomena. It is only when scientists attempt to explain things beyond the originally intended physical sphere that science's adherents get into trouble.

When scientists try to explain a supernatural or paranormal phenomenon (say astral projection, or seeing ghosts, or fire walking) in terms of their own orthodox scientific paradigms, they get into a logical quandary. They find themselves unable to explain strictly documented supernatural phenomena in terms of mere physical categories and principles. Therefore the natural tendency or easy way out for them is simply to dismiss such phenomena as either coincidence, hallucination or at best "anomalous" events of nature.

Here is one "scientific" explanation why people see ghosts, from a report by "Psychology Today." Michael Persinger, Ph.D., a professor of psychology at Laurentian University in Ontario, Canada, has demonstrated that a sensitive temporal lobe—the area (of the brain) responsible for regulating emotions and motivating behaviors—together with naturally occurring magnetic fields, can trigger ghostly encounters. According to him, individuals prone to having paranormal experiences are sensitive to "weak electromagnetic fields and man-made electrical fields."

In other words, people who say they see ghosts are not really seeing ghosts, according to psychologists. Their temporal lobes are merely reacting to electromagnetic field stimulations.

Incomplete, not wrong

Now don't get me wrong. I believe that what science tries to tell us about the nature of reality is not really wrong; it is simply incomplete. It has chosen to confine itself to what can be seen, weighed, analyzed and measured in the laboratory by physical instruments—and has completely ignored what cannot be! Because of this, science has given us a very limited, narrow and, therefore, incomplete view of the universe we live in.

However, the collective experience of mankind throughout the world contradicts such a very narrow and materialistic point of view. There are indeed numerous supernatural and para-physical phenomena that are as real as tables and chairs, although they cannot be seen by the average human being.

Let me just give one or two examples. Some physical ailments, which cannot be diagnosed by medical doctors, may be the work of discarnate spirits or by elementals. The opposite is also true. Some spontaneous remission of illness may be the result of timely intervention by benign spirits or guides. Things appearing or disappearing in a particular place without any rational cause can also be the work of playful spirits.

So, what should the average person believe? On the one hand, we have the priesthood of science saying that everything non-physical is not true. And, on the other hand, we have the priesthood of religion saying that anything that contradicts the Bible is not true.

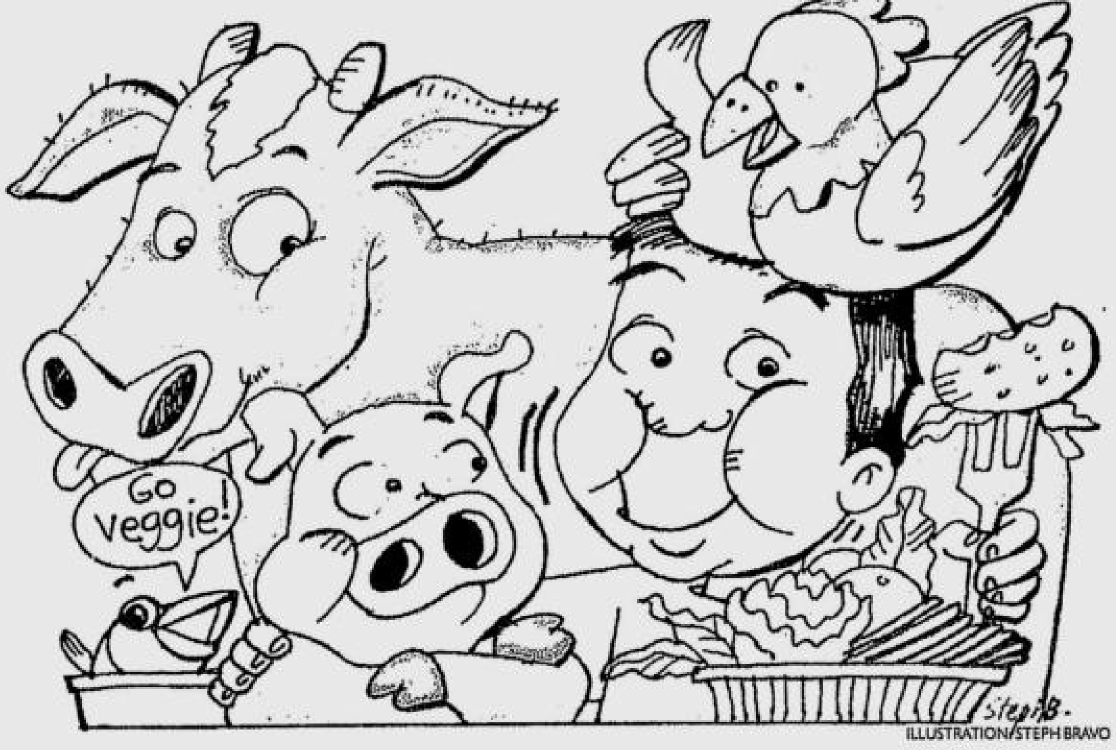
The devil, not ghost

If you report to a priest that you have seen a ghost, he will say, "That cannot be true because the Bible says that once a person dies, he will not come back anymore." So who do the millions of people around the world see when they say they've seen a ghost? "The devil," of course!

This reminds me of the celebrated confrontation between George Price and paranormal phenomena in 1975. As reported by Charles Honorton at a convention in the University of California Los Angeles, Price began with the premise that extra-sensory perception (ESP) and other paranormal claims were impossible. "Since ESP is impossible, experimental evidence that cannot otherwise be explained away should be regarded as evidence of experimenter incompetence or dis-

HUMAN/C4

New Year's for cleansing body, too



ILLUSTRATION/STEPH BRAVO

By Rosanna Escudero
Contributor

THE START of a new year is always a good time to clean up our internal house.

There are many ways by which one can clean up internally, and the ultimate goal of the self-administered cleansing program is to boost the immune system so that it can fight disease more effectively. But first, we have to realize one thing: our bodies are in the condition they are today not only because of what may be ailing us, but from all our living years of keeping an unhealthy diet and ingesting pollutants, which have provided these conditions in the first place.

While there is no perfect diet for anyone or any group of individuals, there are basic guidelines that can ensure a better sense of internal cleanliness.

It is interesting to note that the free radical theory of disease and aging makes evident certain general conclusions about the biological process of metabolism. The more one eats, the shorter he lives.

Human metabolism is clearly designed for small, frequent feeding rather than feasting.

Fat and disease

It has long been noted that animal protein from any source, as well as dietary fat from meat and dairy products, has been linked to many forms of disease such as cancer, heart disease and osteoporosis. Fat in meat and dairy products also happens to be the storage facility of all the production chemicals that are being put into animals to make them grow bigger and faster.

The typical meat and dairy diet not only increases the cancer-causing agents in the body but, due to its low fiber content, also does little to help speed them through the system. Fiber is most essential, for this reason. Without fiber, waste material accumulates and clogs up; the length of time food takes to pass through the colon is greatly increased, thus putting a heavier, unnecessary workload on the digestive system. Animal fats are solid at body temperature, and they clog up intestines just as grease clogs up drains.

Low-fat, high-fiber, starched-based and vegetarian diets are most beneficial for adults

Low-fat, high-fiber, starched-based and vegetarian diets are most beneficial for optimal health in adults.

Eat a sensible diet consisting of plenty of fruits and vegetables and whole grains, such as brown rice. Anything that is white, such as white sugar, white flour, white bread and white rice, has been refined, overprocessed and stripped of all essential nutrients. Foods that have no nutritional value obstruct the intestinal tract, and are best avoided. Cut back on saturated fats especially "junk food" and fried foods.

Intestinal broom

In "Colon Health: The Key to a Vibrant Life," Dr. Norman Walker referred to fiber as our "intestinal broom." Without its bulk in our diets, the kinds of foods we typically eat leave a coating of slime on the inner walls of the colon like a plaster on a wall. In the course of time this coating may gradually increase its thickness until there is only a small hole through the center. So even with regular bowel movements, the colon may be encrusted with a thick rubbery substance that has built up over time. This results in poor absorption of essential nutrients and vitamins that our bodies need to stay healthy.

One major factor is the bacteria in the digestive system that help to digest food. Simply put, there are good bacteria and bad ones. In the process of digestion, dietary animal fat substantially increases the number of bad bacteria, which produce the cancer-causing chemicals carcinogens. The longer these cancer-causing agents stay in the system, the greater the cancer-causing impact.

Meant to be vegetarian

Even the design of the human anatomy points to this conclusion. In his book, "The Theory and Practice of Biological Medicine," Dr. David Edwards states that the character of human teeth, designed for plant-grinding, not tearing flesh, and the great length (42 feet) of the human intestinal canal indicate man is designed to be primarily vegetarian. Man is the only primate that eats meat on a regular basis.

True carnivores have very short and smooth intestinal tracts due to the toxicity of their high-protein animal flesh diet. The rapid intestinal transit time of a short gut permits avoiding the carcinogens, and toxicity of intestinal putrefaction. Ingested animal flesh, which ferments at body temperature, gets slowed down and tends to rot in the intestine of a human being. This sets the stage for a number of health problems. Our bodies just are not designed to digest meat effectively.

The longer transit time produced by low fiber diets and the longer this toxic waste stays in your colon, the more likely that poisons are continually being reabsorbed into your bloodstream. In his book "Tissue Cleansing Through Bowel Management," Dr. Bernard Jensen wrote, "In general, we can say that the blood is only as clean as the bowel, and since the blood circulates through every organ in the body and reaches every cell in the body, toxins in the blood due to a dirty bowel contaminate the entire body. To properly cleanse the body tissue we must start by a thorough cleansing of the bowel."

Enemas and colon therapy

Since toxins accumulate in the liver and colon, and then circulate throughout the body, it is essential then for the health of *all* the organs and tissues of the body, to have clean and healthy colon and liver.

It is never a pleasant a topic to discuss, especially at the dinner table, but it is the first step of a process that any individual who seriously wants to clean house inevitably needs to take. It has always been a common practice for mothers to administer enemas on babies when they wanted to bring fever down, so it is almost certain that most of us have already been through this experience.

An enema, as explained by Anne Frahm in her book, "A Cancer Battle Plan," is the gentle flushing of the bowel, accomplished by inserting fluid through a tube into the rectum. She affirms that a series of well-administered enemas is an extremely important way of helping cut off enemy supply lines in your battle to regain your health.

Enemas are easily self-administered and are an invaluable asset to the cleansing and detoxification process. Enema kits can easily be bought from local drug stores.

There are two types of enemas—the retention enema, which is held in the body for about 15 minutes and whose primary action is to help rid the liver of impurities, and the cleansing enema, which is retained only for few minutes, and is used to flush out the colon.

Liquids used for enemas usually range from warm steam-distilled or purified water, lemon juice solution, herbal infusions such as chamomile, catnip, kelp and acidophilus, as well as coffee enemas. When used as a retention enema, coffee does not go through the digestive system, and does not affect the body as a coffee beverage does.

Caffeine for cleansing

In her book, "Healthy Living," Linda Rector-Page, Ph.D., explained that coffee enemas have become standard in natural healing when liver- and blood-related cancers are present. Caffeine used in this way stimulates the liver and gallbladder to remove toxins, open bile ducts, encourage increased peristaltic action, and produce necessary enzyme activity for healthy red blood cell formation and oxygen uptake.

Coffee enemas are helpful during a serious illness, after hospitalization, and after exposure to toxic chemicals. It can also be used during fasts to relieve the headaches sometimes caused by a fast-induced release of toxins.

Colonics, or colon irrigations as they are sometimes called, are glorified enemas. They involve several flushings over the period of 45 minutes to an hour, administered by a trained technician using a machine specially designed for the purpose. Larger amounts of fluid ranging from one to two pints is administered at a time, while the flow and ejection of liquid is controlled by the machine and technician. The goal of a colonic is to use repetition to break down and clean out any debris that may be encrusted on the colon wall.

Enemas and colon irrigations are always done one an empty stomach. After any enema or colon irrigation session, results are immediately felt—one feels lighter, clear headed and thoroughly refreshed and cleansed.

It's sensible to start out with a series of colon irrigations to clean out completely, then carry out maintenance by doing either regular self-administered enemas or a colonic session once or twice a year thereafter.

Since enemas tend to wash out the good bacteria in the colon along with everything else, it is important to consume a dose of live bacteria such as yogurt or acidophilus capsules immediately after to help restore intestinal flora.

Fiber such as ground flaxseeds and psyllium husks also aid in cleansing the colon.

For the best results, consult a holistic nutritionist or health care practitioner qualified to provide individualized counseling, or call Dr. Vilma Po-Sy at the Polarity Preventive Medical Clinic at 723-9816/9336.

Find yourself, your path and your love story

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

EVERYONE has three hearts—the physical, emotional and the spiritual. Let's talk about healing them.

Once we were bathed in mother's love and full of innocence. During that time, there were no uncertainties. If an infant could verbalize its feelings, it would say, "I am completely loved, I am completely lovable."

Today, as adults can you honestly say the same with confidence? Very few people can because they see flaws that make them less than lovable. But the flaws you see are merely scars of hurts accumulated over a lifetime. Do not lose sight of your true essence. Beneath the past pain is your innocence, that part of your spirit that refuses to die. Despite the hostility and brutality that exist in the world, maintaining innocence is not impossible.

A love story

In every person's deepest nature hides a hero or a heroine of an eternal love story. The love grows from childhood, through family and friends, intimate partners. It ripens through the journey of giving, compassion, forgiveness and renewal. But love that endures chooses only one path.

It is said that when you find your path you will also find your love story. The only way to find your path is to find yourself. You can postpone finding the path, you can lose hope, be indecisive and give up—but these only reflect your ego, which is bound by society, and conventional behavior and expectations. For the true self on the path of love transcends any truth your mind knows at present. It takes courage to claim your destiny with one decisive move—a move that can change your life completely.

A sad tale

Lifelong relationships and marriages are entered into, where love fades over time or provides lasting companionship without growing in its inner dimension by allowing the soul to grow. Any union that stifles the soul is a union based on a weak foundation. And anyone who chooses to stay in a union that chokes the spirit is on a self-destruct mode. Call it emotional suicide.

It takes courage to claim your destiny with one decisive move that can change your life completely

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

The universal law is clear—the only lasting foundation for love is the direct experience of the spirit. This is what is meant by the saying "Two souls become one."

Meditating on the heart

Sit quietly by yourself for 5-10 minutes. Disconnect from the world and all distractions. Close your eyes. Focus your attention on the middle of your chest. You are connecting with your spiritual heart.

Your heart center is the point of awareness where your feelings enter and exit. Allow yourself to feel whatever it is you are feeling - joy, anger, bitterness, resentment, pain and even delight. Just feel. You might sigh or even cry—that's okay. Honor your feelings. You are meditating and purifying.

Understand your emotions—why they exist. By so doing you can release them. Let them go. Then affirm to yourself: "My heart is open."

Obliterating love

Love gets left behind when—power, money, security are priorities in a relationship.

Ego needs come first—"I want this, I need that..."

Conditions are set and demands made—"I love you if you change your way"; "You will lose the love of your family if you don't behave"; "I will only fall in love if the man or woman fits a certain description" (tall, dark, handsome and rich or young, pretty, intelligent and charming...).

Insistence on romantic love when you already have a commitment, body and soul...

Heart-friendly tips

- Adopt a healthy lifestyle through good nutrition and exercise.
- Your diet must be high in fruits, vegetables, fish and whole grains and low in saturated fats (mostly animal-based) and transfats.
- Take daily vitamin-mineral supplements especially omega 3 and folic acid (vitamin B) antioxidants' help like selenium, vitamin A, C, E and beta carotene.
- Engage in mind, body therapies like meditation, yoga, prayer groups.

Perhaps the greatest quality of love is constancy. If you love yourself, you will be constant in your loving ways toward your beloved and yourself. You are the beginning and the end of all that is loving. So it is imperative that you remain your loving self.

As famous tenor Josh Groban sings in his near immortal song, "You're Still You": "I've loved you for so long and after all is said and done, you're still you."

Love and light!

Portions excerpted from "The Path To Love" by Dr. Deepak Chopra

Human awareness . . .

From page C3

honesty, instead of ESP. Seventeen years later in a cryptic 'Apology to Rhine and Soal,' Price retracted these allegations."

I doubt whether the Church fathers will make a similar retraction of their erroneous denial of many paranormal phenomena that have been reported and are still being reported throughout the world.

I believe that unless the priesthoods of both science and religion grow in their awareness and experience the paranormal for themselves, they will never budge from their orthodox, but anachronistic points of view.

Address letters to this column to 308 Prince Plaza I, 106 Legaspi St., Greenbelt, Makati City or e-mail jlicauco@edsamail.com.ph. Visit my website at http://j.licauco.tripod.com. Listen to my dzMM radio program every Sunday, 6-8pm.

Talk on disabilities and giftedness

ARE you a parent who dreams of having a genius child? Or are you a parent who cannot tell disability myths from facts?

Your big questions will be answered by Dr. I.S. Tan, a visiting pediatric psychiatrist widely known as the author of 200 articles on traumas and experiences, both young and adults, related to disabilities. Dr. Tan is also the founder of Well Kids School for Genius in Taiwan and USA.

Dr. I.S. Tan will be available on Feb. 14, 8-11 a.m., at Museo Pambata Multi-Purpose Hall to give a talk called "Brain Hurts." There is a fee of P50.

Museo Pambata Foundation Inc. is on Roxas Boulevard corner South Drive, Manila. Call or fax 712-3731 or 785-3528 (Sally), 523-1797/98 (Des) or e-mail sfadcci@hotmail.com

Gift of health

VALENTINE'S Day traditionally mandates gift-giving between contemporary, caring couples. Perhaps it's time for a unique yet surprisingly relaxing treat made for one's complete well-being.

Give the most important person in your life the gift of total health with a unique service—the merging of Eastern and Western medical treatments available only at SynergyMed Center.

The clinic, located on the 23/F Discovery Suites, ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City, offers traditional Chinese medicine at its Eastern wing, ideal for those seeking permanent relief to long-standing aches and pains. Treatments include acupuncture, acupressure and herbal medicine, starting all customers on the road to good physical and mental health.

SynergyMed Center also offers state-of-the-art medical service at its Western wing through Manila's finest doctors giving comprehensive diagnosis and treatment using modern equipment and technology.

Avail of SynergyMed Center's special Valentine treat for free initial consultations and a 50-percent discount on all TCM treatments. The promo runs until March. Gift certificates are also available for an Executive Check-up Package and a one-time treatment package. Call 631-2611.

For feedback, text us at (0919)880-33-54 or email us at pr_lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph
LIFESTYLE
Nature

Born to be wild

THE TARSIER has an attitude as cold as Greta Garbo's.

A single tarsier needs at least two hectares of space all to itself. A cage is definitely the last place it wants to live in

By Alex Y. Vergara

THE PHILIPPINE tarsier is dubbed the "world's smallest monkey," but the animal is actually a prosimian like a lemur, not an anthropoid like Cheetah the ape.

So don't bother giving it a banana. The tarsier prefers to catch its own food consisting mainly of crickets, grasshoppers, moths and butterflies.

Its pair of round, bulging eyes may look sharp and bright during the day, but they are actually more useful at night when the animal hunts for food.

The tarsier is a nocturnal creature, you see, and, with an attitude as cold as Greta Garbo's, it does not make for an ideal pet.

"The tarsier is a shy animal," said hunter-turned-conservationist Lito Pizarra, who used to stuff it and other animals for a living until he finally realized his folly.

"Unlike monkeys, it doesn't live with a clan. It prefers to live alone after mating. There have been cases of captured tarsiers killing themselves by holding their breaths or banging their heads against their cages."

Tarsier refuge

We learned these facts about Bohol's official mascot from Pizarra in less than an hour of touring the Philippine Tarsier and Wildlife Sanctuary, a 7.5-ha refuge in the town of Corella, Bohol. The sanctuary was established during President Ramos' time when he de-

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Demonstration/Student Participation Classes

DELIGHTFULLY NO BAKE DESSERTS 3 (new course) February 15, Saturday, 1:30-5:00 pm Durian Cheesecake, Fruited Panna Cotta with Chocolate Sauce, Black and White Gelatin Dessert, Refrigerator Cake with Peaches and Cream, Maja Blanca Salad Tuition Fee - P850

BAKING BASICS UPDATED February 17, Monday, 1:30-5:00 pm Blueberry and Peach Cake, Orange Poppy Seed Cake with Almond Topping, Not Too Cheesy Cheesecake, Old Fashioned Ensaymada with Parmesan Cheese Topping, Orange Liqueur Butter Cake Tuition Fee - P850

FROM ESPRESSO TO FRAPP (new course) February 22, Saturday, 1:30-5:00 pm A half-day demo course on how to prepare the basic coffee preparations such as the espresso, café americano, cappuccino, café latte, café mocha, iced latte, iced café mocha, frapps in different flavors and flavored iced tea complete with garnishings and presentation that can rival your favorite coffee bar. After the demo, each student will be preparing a coffee concoction of his/her choice to be assisted by the barristas of Torani. Both household and commercial type coffee machines will be used. This is your chance to be a barrista for a day. Tuition Fee - P900

RECIPES FOR LENT (new course) February 25, Tuesday, 1:30-5:00 pm Lola Tasia's Spanish Bacalao, Sizzling Tofu with Teriyaki Sauce, Salt and Pepper Squid with 2 Types of Dipping Sauce, Laing, Green Mango Salad with Salted Eggs and Dilis Tuition Fee - P1,000

Hands-On Classes

HANDS-ON BAKING 2 February 18, Tuesday, 9:30 am to 5:30 pm A hands-on baking workshop featuring the following recipes from start to finish - Light Vanilla Cake with Marshmallow Icing and Praline, Butter Cake with Old Fashioned Caramel Frosting and Brazo de Mercedes Tuition Fee - P1,000 (lunch included)

FONDANT CAKES IN MINIATURE March 3, 4 and 5, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, 9:30 am to 5:30 pm Move over big cakes, small cakes are in! 3 whole day hands-on sessions from designing the cake to baking, basic flower making in gumpaste and decorating using a new fondant formula. Each student will bake and decorate a mini tiered cake and 2 mini cakes perfect for giveaways and for intimate celebrations. Tuition Fee - P3,750 (lunch included)

HANDS-ON BAKING 6 (new course) March 7, Friday, 9:30 am to 5:30 pm Baking basics updated - Chocolate Chiffon Cake with Fluffy Caramel Frosting and Toblerone Bits, Orange Cake with Orange Buttercream, Toffee Pie with Bananas and Cream Tuition Fee - P1,000 (lunch included)

Watch Dorothy in action at the Bakery Fair, World Trade Center, February 27, 10:30 am.

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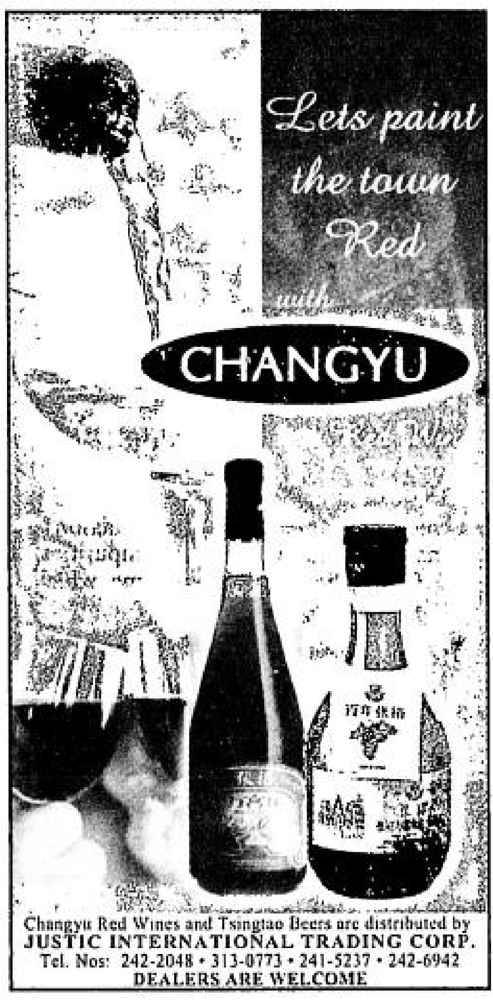

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Questions on Women's Health:
YOUR DOCTOR KNOWS BEST

Q: With all these talks about pH levels and natural substances, I've become too conscious of the way I wash myself. Could you tell me how to properly wash my private area?

A: When you wash your most private part, you should start from the front towards the back to prevent organisms from the anus from contaminating the vagina. Also, when washing the external portion, be sure to wipe it dry. Why women wash is of course to feel fresher and cleaner. But the most important reason is to protect themselves against infection.

Now, there are many ways to protect you from infection:
1. Keep the genital area always clean and dry.
2. Wear cotton underwear or pantyhose with cotton crotch.
3. Change tampons or pads frequently.
4. Be sure sexual partner practices good hygiene and safe sex.
5. Loose weight if you are obese.
6. Maintain the natural acidity of the genitalia.

And the best way to maintain the vaginal acidity is to use a feminine wash that lists under its ingredients: Lactic Acid. The reason? Products with Lactic Acid work to maintain the natural acidity of the vagina. This acidity, which ranges from pH 3.8 - pH 4.2, effectively inhibits the growth of harmful bacteria and thus protects you from infections. This acidic pH protects the external area from infection caused by harmful bacteria because they cannot thrive and proliferate in this acidic pH.

This message was brought to you by
Philippine Obstetrical and Gynecological Society
and
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Born to be wild

Certain tour operators have turned the tarsier into a circus attraction by having tourists pose with it for a fee

From page D1

clared the tarsier a "specially protected faunal species of the Philippines."

Aside from Bohol, the tarsier is also found in Leyte, Samar and parts of Mindanao. Unless current threats to its natural environment are addressed, the tarsier, which is an endangered species like the Philippine eagle, could disappear altogether.

"Illegal logging and slash-and-burn farming are the leading threats to the tarsier's habitat," said Pizarra. "Poachers also catch tarsiers and sell them as pets. They're very fragile and should be left alone in the wild."

Staffed by five people, including a Peace Corps volunteer, the sanctuary is tasked to do research on tarsiers and breed them in the wild. It generates funds from donations and the P20-entrance fee each visitor pays to explore the site, which includes a tarsier museum. The sanctuary is also open to researchers and monitors the activities of poachers, although it has no police powers to go after offenders.

Resident royalty

The sanctuary, which spills over to more than a hundred hectares of adjacent forest, is home to almost a thousand tarsiers, including its most famous resident, Datu Charlie, a 7-year-old *maomag*—as the animal is known in Bohol—named after the United Kingdom's Prince Charles.

Although Pizarra frowns on an existing practice among some businessmen in nearby Loboc town of exploiting tarsiers by having them photographed with tourists, he made an exception and presented Datu Charlie to the British royal, a staunch environmentalist, who visited Malacañang a few years back. The prince was photographed holding his *katukayo*.

"They (tarsiers) normally get tense when held by a human," said Pizarra, the sanctuary's field manager. "They're meant to live in the wild." Of course, Datu Charlie is an exception. As the animal's handler, Pizarra has looked after him since he was a baby.

"Datu Charlie's mother died soon after giving birth to him," he explained. "Since he was so tiny, I couldn't find a feeding bottle small enough to nurse him. I fed him by wringing a piece of cotton soaked in milk. He still recognizes me and responds to my call."

Our group failed to see Datu Charlie that morning, but we spotted two of his kind soon after venturing into the forest with Pizarra. An assistant plucked one that was hugging the trunk of a small tree and gave it to Pizarra, who tried to calm it by wrapping the bewildered creature with his shirt. He then cupped his hands and breathed down on the animal as if to further reassure it.

They bite

"Tarsiers may seem cuddly and defenseless," he warned, "but they do bite. Since they also eat poisonous insects like centipedes, a tarsier's bite could be fatal. I know of somebody who died several days after being bitten."

The tarsier that sat on his hand, however, was in no biting mood. It blinked several times before yawning, eliciting oohs and ahs from the women. But before we could satisfy our curiosity, it escaped from Pizarra's grasp and hopped back to the nearby forest.

FORMER hunter Lito Pizarra is now the tarsier's leading defender.

Tarsiers normally live up to 20 years in the wild. Like humans, female tarsiers usually bear one offspring per pregnancy. The gestation period takes as long as six months. Those in captivity, however, rarely reach their 13th birthday because of undue stress. Who wouldn't be? For one thing, tarsiers are territorial.

"Research has shown that a single tarsier needs at least two hectares of space all to itself," said Danny Nazareno, a registered nurse and the sanctuary's office manager. "A cage is definitely the last place it wants [to be in]."

And since they're nocturnal creatures, tarsiers are naturally sluggish during the day. This, however, hasn't stopped at least two riverboat cruise operators in Loboc from turning their resident tarsiers into a circus attraction by allowing tourists to pose with them for a fee, disguised as a donation. A painted billboard along the Loboc River even features a smiling woman holding a tarsier.

"The practice forces the tarsier to stay up and cater to an endless stream of tourists when it should be sleeping," said Nazareno. It had become so systematic, Pizarra pointed out, that as soon as a stressed-out tarsier died or got sick, operators simply replaced it.

What makes the practice more appalling is it appears to have the blessings of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. The operators brandish DENR-issued certificates of accreditation and registration (CAR) that were said to have expired in September. Their applications for renewal are pending with DENR.

"Environmentalists have taken us to task for allowing the operators to get away with (what they are doing)," said Nazareno. "But we don't have any police powers to stop them."

Catch-22

When the sanctuary brought the matter to the DENR's attention, the regional office reportedly promised to look into it, but was unable to do anything much because of the CAR, which it issued to operators in the first place. The sanctuary was right back where it started.

The Regional Tourism Council under Bohol Gov. Erico Aumentado has also voiced its concern by passing a series of resolutions urging the DENR to enforce laws pertaining to the tarsier. One of the resolutions urges operators of tarsier facilities in Loboc to provide an environment or facility similar to that of the tarsier foundation as a condition for their continued operation.

Before operators and their supporters could accuse them of meddling with the private sector, people behind the sanctuary said the NGO was simply living up to its mandate of protecting the beleaguered tarsier from undue exploitation.

"What we're questioning here is how the animals are handled," said Nazareno. "There's an apparent lack of monitoring on DENR's part. They just rely on reports prepared by the operators themselves. A CAR's purpose should go beyond the promotion of ecotourism. Above all, it should help conserve threatened and endangered wild life species."

While the issue remains unresolved, it's best for people who go to Bohol to steer clear of certain operators who use hapless tarsiers to lure tourists to their more lucrative attractions. Datu Charlie is best seen and admired in his natural habitat.

For more information on the Philippine tarsier, visit the sanctuary's website at www.philippinetarsier.org

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

NIKI Wu, Chang Chen and Shu Qi gathered to watch the first race of the Louis Vuitton Cup Round Robin 3 races

Stars shine brightly in NZ party

AUSTRALIAN fashion designer Collette Dinnigan

NICOLE Eggert, covers the action for E!

TAIWANESE superstar Shu Qi and fellow actor Chang Chen joined 1,200 black-tie revelers at the Louis Vuitton Cup party at Auckland's Devonport Naval Base Dry Dock.

Hailed as the "party of the year," leading members of the world's sailing fraternity—including "Mr. America's Cup" Denise Conner and Team Alinghi's Russel Coutts—also attended.

Louis Vuitton specially commissioned a theatrical performance as highlight of the party. The world-famous Inside Out Productions recreated classic scenes from ancient sea mythology.

Hollywood actress Mary Louise Parker and her husband, actor Billy Crudup, also joined the festivities.

After the party, Shu, Chang Chen and Taiwanese singer Nikki Wu watched the first race of the third Round Robin.

Also in Auckland was Japanese soccer super-star Hidetoshi Nakata, who toured the Louis Vuitton Cup media center on Hobson Wharf in New Zealand.

2002 is the 20th anniversary of the Louis Vuitton Cup. To win the America's Cup, competitors must first win the Louis Vuitton Cup. The LV Cup winner will challenge Team New Zealand, defender of the America's Cup, the world's oldest sporting trophy.

Louis Vuitton is at the G/F of 6750 Ayala Avenue, Makati City. Visit its website at www.vuitton.com.

ACTOR Billy Crudup and wife actress Mary Louise Parker

Celebrities join golf challenge

PHILIPS Consumer Electronics (PCE), Europe's largest consumer electronics company, held recently the 2003 PCE Golf Challenge, The Power of Two, at the Manila Southwoods Golf and Country Club.

Philips Philippines CEO Med Mateo welcomed the company's strategic partners, appliance dealers from all over the country.

Entertainment people also joined the tournament. They included Lea Navarro, Al Quinn, Gary Lising, Buboy Garovillo, Bert Nievera and Jaime Fabregas.

Edu Manzano hosted the awarding ceremonies, which featured impersonator Kris Anino. Top Philips products were raffled off.

Winners in this year's PCE Golf Challenge were: Alan Dungao-Class A, Antenor Banyagale-Class B and Jimmy Lim-Class C. Runners-up were Victor Gutierrez (Class A), Ruby Mago (Class B) and Med Mateo (Class C). Special awards were given to Ed Anselmo (Nearest to the Pin), Dindo Menoria (Longest Drive), Dong Matias and Bong Dungao (Most Exercised Golfers), Roger Lo (Lowest Gross), and Boy Cunanan (Lowest Net).

K SERVICO'S Dindo Menoria and host Edu Manzano

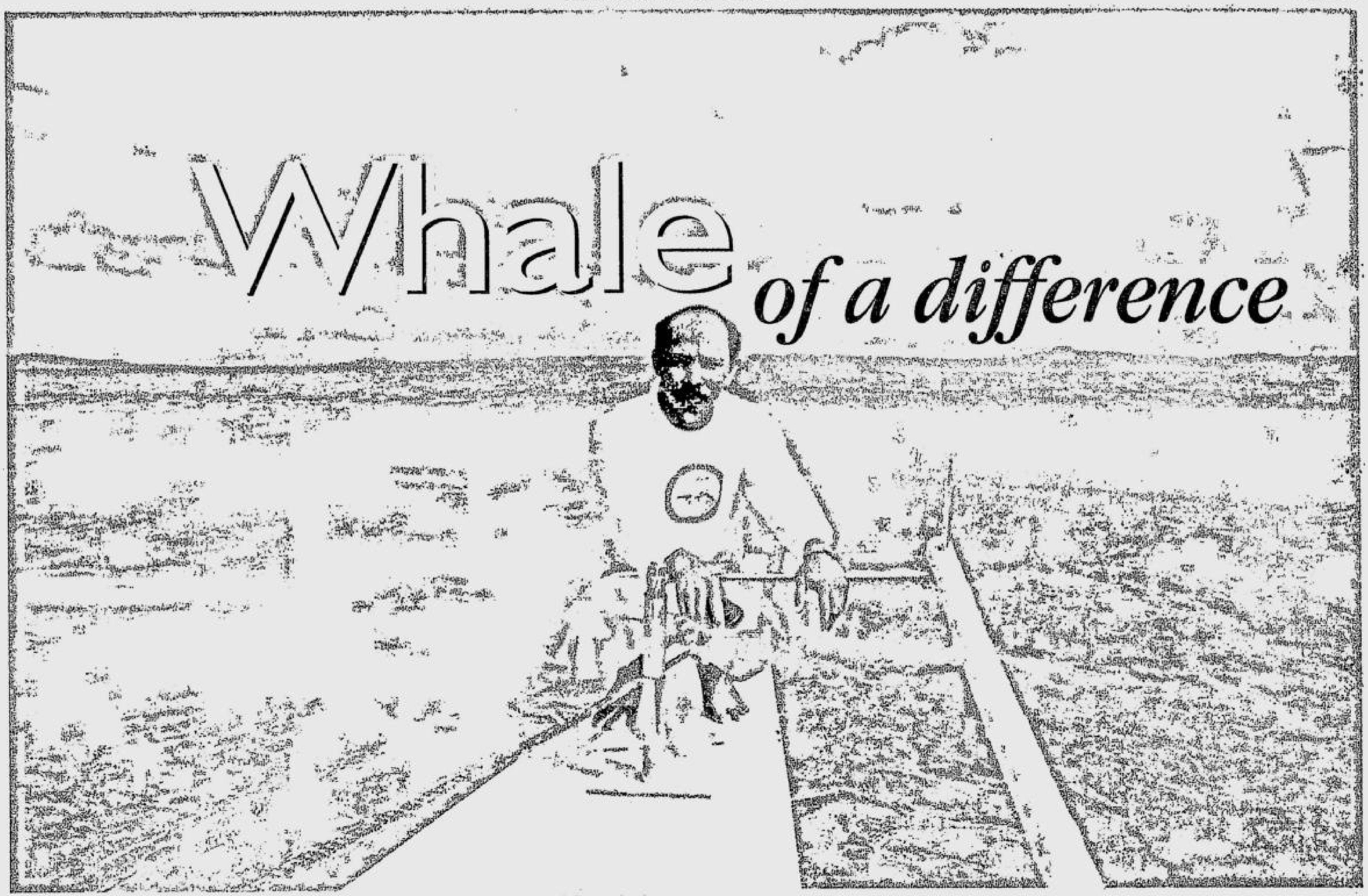
PCE general manager Angelo Valenton with Rhine Marketing's Boy Cunanan

SAVERSMART'S Allan Uy and Ocampo's Dan Tayag

ESLA'S Jimmy Lim, PCE's John Tan Chong and Rene del Rosario

(seated from left) DING Bolanos, Leah Navarro, Al Quinn and Jimmy Fabregas; (standing) Gary Lising, Rhine Marketing's Ed Anselmo, Buboy Garovillo, John Lesaca and Events. Work's Mart Miranda

Whale of a difference



FROM FOE TO FRIEND. Leo Sumalpong is determined to preserve the marine mammals he used to hunt.

Text by Cheche V. Moral
Photos by Joan Bondoc

THEY say you cannot teach an old dog new tricks. That nearly was the case for this man and his community of whale hunters.

A whaler for most of his adult life, Leo Sumalpong is a quiet, unassuming man. His dark, coffee-colored skin proves his many years at sea. But for some time now, he has been dealing with the radical change in his small community in Pamilacan Island.

Before, the residents of Pamilacan brought in about P10 million in annual revenues to the island from the whaling trade. The economy of the tiny island off Bohol province's south coast—home to some 265 families—relied almost entirely on the centuries-old practice of whaling and manta-ray fishing. The island was, in fact, named after *pilak*, the Visayan word for the hook implement used to impale the whales.

As Pamilacan took pride in its rich marine life, with a wealth of fish and a dozen species of resident and migratory marine mammals (dolphins and whales) thriving in its waters, the community lived in relative contentment. Whaling was big business, with exporters of whale meat from Cebu and buyers from as far as Taiwan. One whale shark could fetch up to P120,000, says Sumalpong, and the whalers of Pamilacan would catch from 90 to a high of 200 a year. That number did not even include the manta rays and the occasional dolphins caught. Big fish literally meant big money.

The islanders continued hunting even when the national government imposed a ban in 1992. "If you earned P100,000 for a period of six months, that was huge," Sumalpong wistfully recalls in Filipino.

TINY PARADISE. Pamilacan Island's unspoiled beach and abundant marine life are a delight to international and local tourists.

With the whale and dolphin catch fast dwindling, Pamilacan Island says goodbye to hunting and hello to sustainable ecotourism

SMALL FRY. A resident shows off his catch of the day—a far cry from the islanders' hauls of whale sharks and manta rays in the recent past.

Unsustainable

The annual take, however, proved unsustainable. The whale shark and dolphin population dramatically diminished. "In the past, you'll grow tired of watching them at play," he says, looking out to the sea.

It isn't a good day for dolphin-watching—the sky is overcast, the waters choppy. Sumalpong knows this, but his disappointment is unmistakable, like it is his own doing the animals won't be turning out for his guests. This is, however, not entirely untrue. "Their number before could reach up to thousands," he says, touching his balding pate ruefully. "Then it dwindled..."

When the World Wide Fund-Philippines entered the picture in 1997 with a plan to declare Bohol Sea, particularly the island of Pamilacan, a marine mammal protected area, and establish a community-based ecotourism project as an alternative source of livelihood, the islanders were agitated. They felt threatened.

"Whaling was a way of life for us. It was hard to change that," says Sumalpong. "We were not affected only economically; the move also took away the adventure. Hunting was our life."

WWF spearheaded seminars and awareness programs to turn the whalers into dolphin and whale spotters. It helped form the community's Pamilacan Island Dolphin Whale Watching Organization (PIDWWO). The Pamilacan Marine Sanctuary was also designated.

The project, however, divided the islanders. Some cooperated, others continued to hunt. "We went our own ways," Sumalpong says. "If your boat conked out at sea, no one would help you. They'd even scoff at you."

With four growing children, small-time fishing was not enough to sustain his family's needs. "I wasn't happy with the change," he confesses. The income from whaling is a far cry from spotting whales and dolphins for tourists, he says. Still, he attended the ecotourism seminars, but not without some reservation. When the WWF project caught the media's attention, the hunting ban was strictly enforced in March 1998.

It took a while for Sumalpong to understand the long-term effect of their trade. "You could be earning a lot, but what if the supply runs out?," Sumalpon says. "With the ecotourism program, we may not be making much money now, but we are assured the animals will be here for a long time."

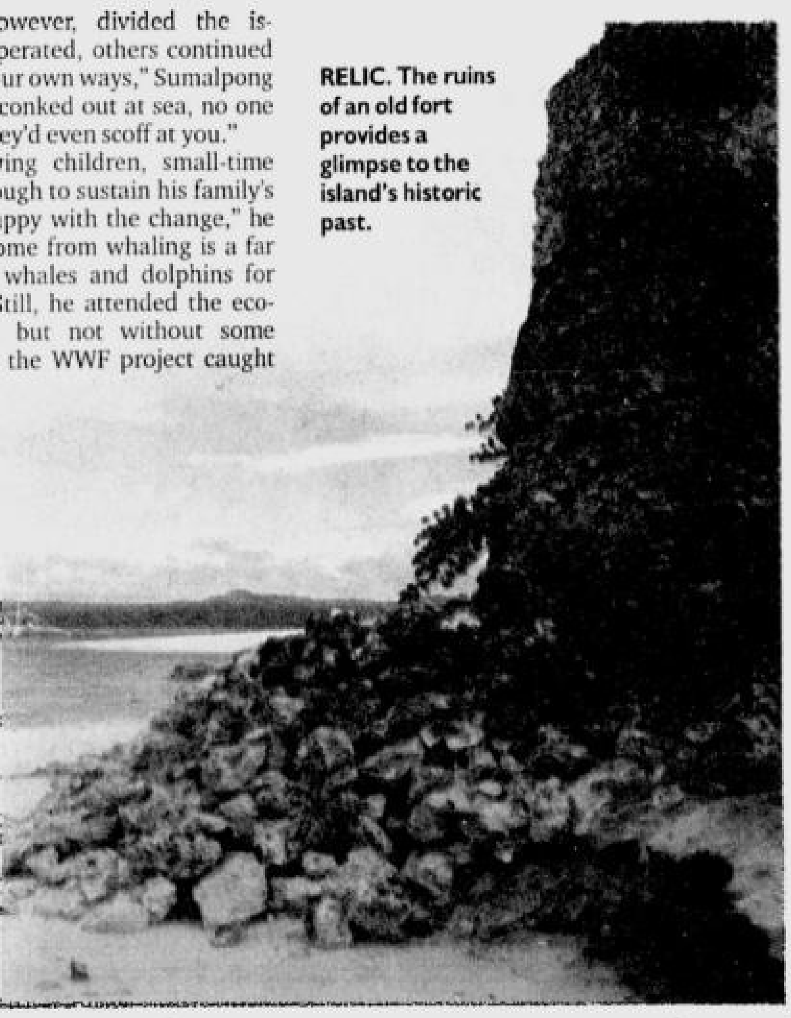
Turnaround

Now the operations manager of the 140-member PIDWWO, Sumalpong says the whale- and dolphin-watching project has yet to come to full fruition. With only four boats for its touring operations, PIDWWO is hoping to increase this number with the funding given by the New Zealand Official Development Assistance. The organization, which is set to become a cooperative, is now independently run by the islanders.

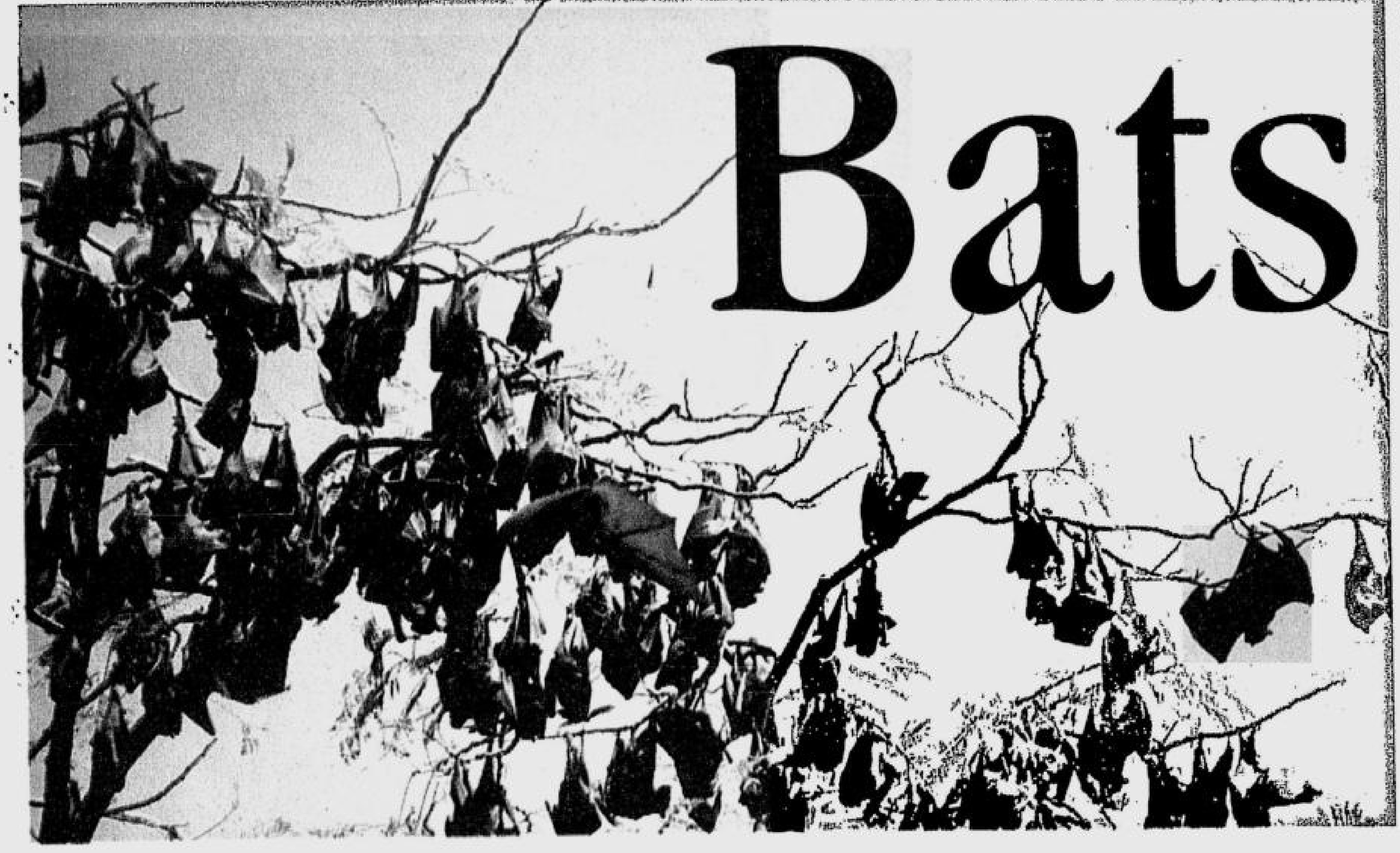
Banking on Pamilacan's natural beauty, PIDDWO is embarking on a new ecotourism project. Called Marine Life Tour, the package includes a tour of the island, snorkeling in its clear azure waters and lunch on its lovely beach. The program, which will start in April, is being promoted by Travel Village and endorsed by the Department of Tourism. "Dolphin- and whale-watching will be the bonus," Sumalpong says, dutifully indulging his guests with freshly picked *buko* and a simple mid-morning meal prepared by his wife and neighbors.

Sumalpong, like his fellow islanders, still has to throw his net into the ocean to supplement the family's income. Legitimate fishing is small fry but "we have to take things in stride. It's not every day that we have tourists," he says with a wry grin. "But it makes us feel good to see the dolphins and whale sharks slowly returning into Pamilacan's waters," he adds, optimism written on his face.

Call Travel Village at (038) 411-3510 to -13 local 607, telefax (038) 411-5928, or e-mail tvillage@mozcom.com



RELIC. The ruins of an old fort provides a glimpse to the island's historic past.



Bats are romantic creatures, too

THEY need the forest as it needs them.

They are monogamous and capable of great sacrifice

By Constantino C. Tejero

BATS have an image problem,” says Ding Roco, Pilipinas Shell Foundation Inc. (PSFI) executive director and Shell Philippines Exploration BV (SPEX) deputy managing director.

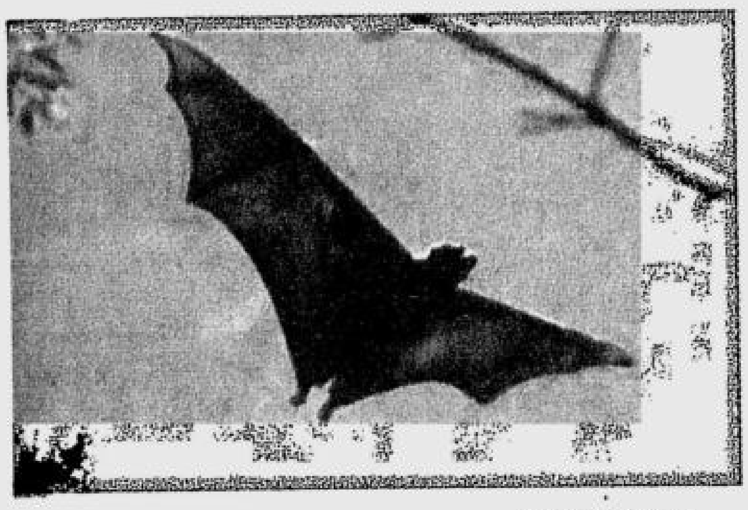
The nocturnal creatures, Roco explains, have long been associated with Dracula, vampires, witches and assorted malefactors. So instead of protecting them, people recklessly destroy them, often for no reason at all.

Guano, from bat droppings, is a valuable source of organic fertilizer. The dung is also used as a cure for blindness. Bat meat is a traditional food for some people, such as the Aetas, and it is reportedly good for staving off cold.

But many people kill bats on a whim, then throw the carcasses away, often thinking they're evil, harmful, or simply bad luck.

The Chinese, on the other hand, believe they bring good luck. Wise Chinese. Because bats, the only mammals capable of sustained flight, actually play an important role in maintaining the earth's biodiversity and ecosystem integrity. Just as they depend on the forest for their survival, so does the forest depend on them for its own.

Through their feeding activities, bats help maintain tropical forests by cross-pollinating plants and dispersing seeds (usually of mango, guava, durian, banana, *taluto, kamagong, kapok, kasoy, langka, sampalok*), thereby "healing degraded areas through natural replanting."



MAGNIFICENT wingspan

Lost habitat

The roost site of the fruit and nectar-eating bats in the forested mountains of Subic Bay in Zambales is one of the largest in the world. Here the bats—the world's largest, the giant Philippine fruit bat (*Acedoron jubatus*) with a 1.5-meter wingspan and weighing 1.5 kg; the second-largest, the golden-crowned flying fox (*Pteropus vampyrus lanensis*); and the world's smallest, the lesser flat-headed bat (*Tylonecteris pachypus*)—congregate.

The Subic Bay Freeport Zone has 10,000 hectares of lowland forest, but it is now gradually being diminished by the advance of several hundred kilometers of non-native grassland and cultivated fields, in the process reducing the habitat of those "creatures of the night."

And so they have to fly over 50 km to get their food, making them vulnerable to hunters. When looking for food, the mother bat takes its juvenile or pup along, embracing the baby bat close to its chest. If you shoot one, two die. Now the bat is an endangered species.

In the last three years, SPEX and PSFI had been funding and implementing the Bat Habitat Restoration Project, co-managing it with the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA). SPEX spearheaded the project as part of the Malampaya Deep-Water Gas to Power. (Other Malampaya environmental projects include conservation of Mindoro's biodiversity, eradication of malaria, conservation of endangered sea mammals in northern Palawan, community-based forest management in Subic.)

The first of its kind in the country, the project aims to restore and preserve the feeding and nesting area of the bats by planting forest land with the trees that they need. It is hoped that this will "reestablish ample food sources near their nooks to prevent them from traveling distances for nourishment, thereby reducing exposure to predators and helping prevent their extinction."

Survival rate

On Feb. 5, Shell transferred the project to the SBMA, in a ceremony attended by Roco and SBMA chair Felicito Payumo. The signing of the agreement was done on the islet of Agusuhin on the bay.

"These bats are actually romantic creatures," says Roco. "They're monogamous. And they're capable of great sacrifice."

He tells how, to reduce competition for food, the male of the species would leave the area to the females and the juveniles and go some distance to look for food, at great peril to their lives. It is usually when they return home at break of day that they get hunted down.

On top of Cubi Point, in the Crown Peak Bat Kingdom, is a view deck where one can see these creatures, called *bayakan* by locals. Far from looking romantic, however, they look rather weird, hanging upside down like dead leaves on the branches of trees, reddish-brown in the afternoon light.

COMMUNITY volunteers clear the area for tree planting.

It is a lush forest over there, also inhabited by deer, wild boars, monkeys. There is a stirring in one tree, some squeaks and cries, and the bats start flying here, flying there.

Though they have a good survival rate because of their habits and remarkable longevity, bats have a low reproductive performance. Edu, a forester from the SBMA Ecology Center, says their mating season is in September, and a female gives birth to only one pup a year.

About 70 years ago, there were over 100,000 fruit bats in Subic's forest. Conservative estimate places the number now at 24,000-30,000.

(The total is reached by estimating the number of bats per flock. Only the great fruit bats can be estimated, since the tiny ones, as small as mice, keep hiding in the hollow of the stems of the bamboo.)

Feeding area

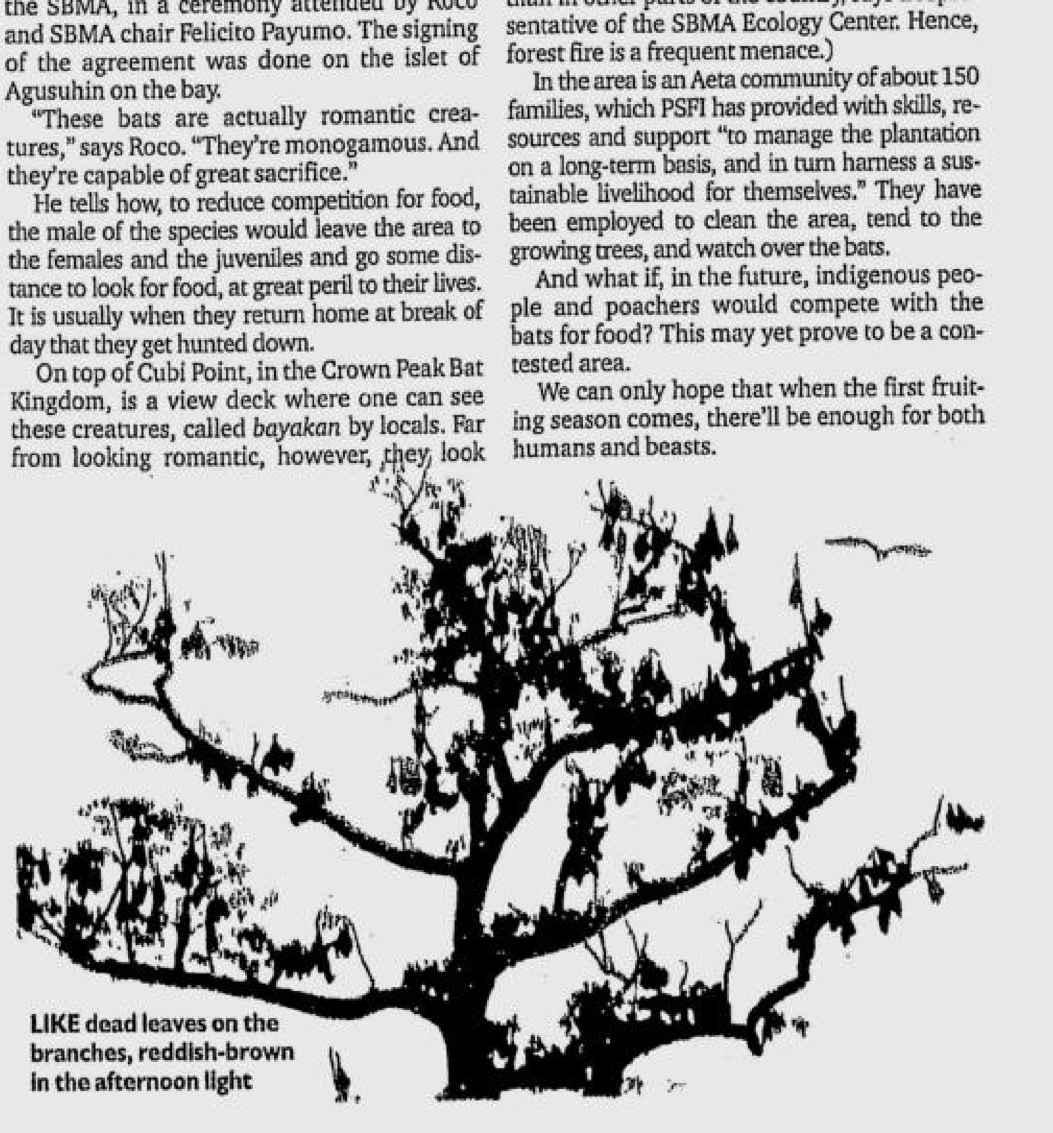
A few kilometers from Cubi Point, about 20 minutes drive away, is Mt. Sta. Rita. On its western slopes, 20 hectares have been planted to fruit-bearing trees, mostly mango, and banana plants.

Over 20,000 trees had been planted, but the number was reduced to about half by a forest fire last summer. (With its hot days starting in November, the dry season is longer in Subic than in other parts of the country, says a representative of the SBMA Ecology Center. Hence, forest fire is a frequent menace.)

In the area is an Aeta community of about 150 families, which PSFI has provided with skills, resources and support "to manage the plantation on a long-term basis, and in turn harness a sustainable livelihood for themselves." They have been employed to clean the area, tend to the growing trees, and watch over the bats.

And what if, in the future, indigenous people and poachers would compete with the bats for food? This may yet prove to be a contested area.

We can only hope that when the first fruiting season comes, there'll be enough for both humans and beasts.



LIKE dead leaves on the branches, reddish-brown in the afternoon light

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Nicky S. Montoya, M.D.

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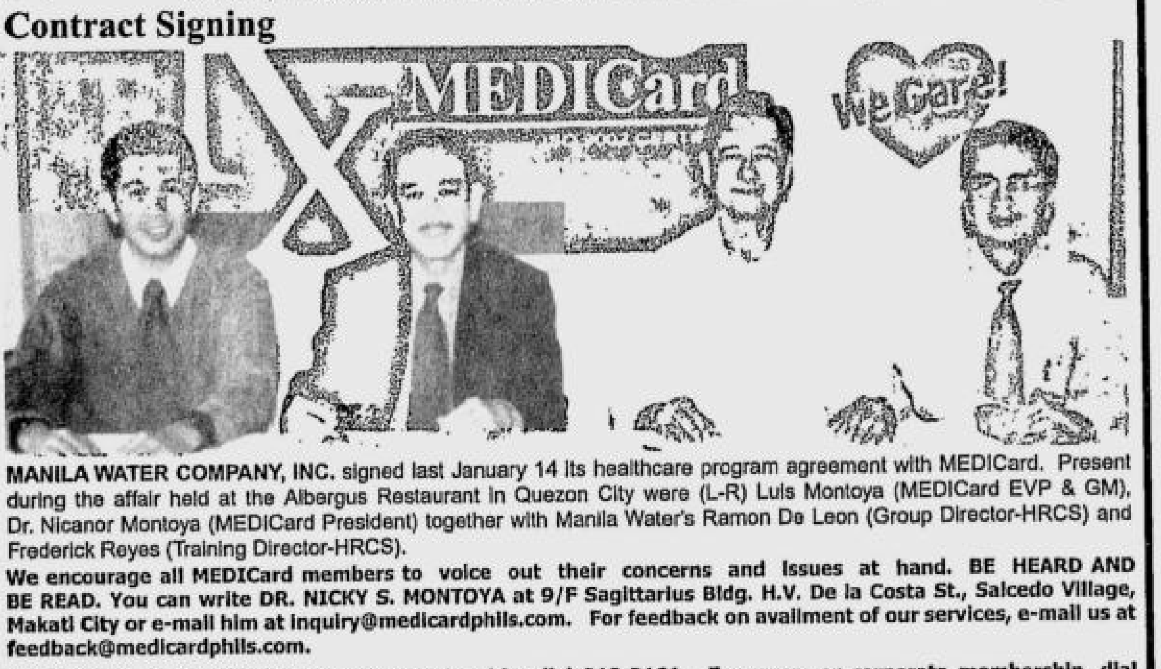
Contract Signing



MANILA WATER COMPANY, INC. signed last January 14 its healthcare program agreement with MEDICard. Present during the affair held at the Albergus Restaurant in Quezon City were (L-R) Luis Montoya (MEDICard EVP & GM), Dr. Nicanor Montoya (MEDICard President) together with Manila Water's Ramon De Leon (Group Director-HRCS) and Frederick Reyes (Training Director-HRCS).

We encourage all MEDICard members to voice out their concerns and issues at hand. BE HEARD AND BE READ. You can write DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA at 9/F Sagittarius Bldg. H.V. De la Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City or e-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com. For feedback on availment of our services, e-mail us at feedback@medicardphils.com.

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